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JOSEPH FOUCHÉ

VOLUME XI

Autobiography in the Age of Napoleon

(1780—1820)

INCLUDING THE SELF-NARRATIVES OF

FOUCHÉ, Napoleon's celebrated Minister of Police; NAPOLEON, the greatest military genius of France; WELLINGTON, the conqueror of Napoleon; WILLIAM WORDSWORTH, greatest of nature poets; SIR WALTER SCOTT, foremost of romantic story-tellers; METTERNICH, chief of the statesmen opposed to Napoleon; and EUGENE VIDOCQ, the original of all story-book detectives.

WITH AN INTRODUCTORY ESSAY BY

JOHN B. SHAW

President of Elmira College

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INTRODUCTION TO VOLUME XI

AUTOBIOGRAPHY IN THE AGE OF NAPOLEON

1780—1820

THE age of Napoleon might well be limited within even narrower dates than those outlining the present volume. Napoleon first rose to power in France in 1795. By 1798 he had complete control of the government; six years later his enraptured countrymen proclaimed him Emperor. In 1809 he married an Austrian princess and became the recognized lord of Europe. In 1812 he began his disastrous Russian campaign; then his bubble burst, and he was driven into final unchanging exile in 1815. For twenty years Napoleon thus swept the world like a hurricane; no man could stand against him, no general meet him in battle, no diplomat outwit him, no accident overwhelm him. At length God sent against him a sudden unexpected Russian winter, as though of direct purpose to prove that earth's forces are mightier than the mightiest among men.

In such an age our volume will naturally look first for any autobiographic words from its central figure. More books probably have been written about Napoleon than about any other person not accepted as divine. These books quote all of his words that writers can gather or remember. But a vaguely quoted and perchance distorted saying is vastly different from an autobiographer's own well-considered statement about himself. The only such definite presentation of Napoleon's life by Napoleon occurs in the mandate or testament of counsel which just before his death he dictated for his son, that little son who for his mother's sake was being protected by the Austrian court and brought up to be an Austrian. To this celebrated dying testament of self-defense, explanation and affection, we have prefixed the most noted of Napoleon's letters to Josephine, his earlier wife. In these, though perhaps less so

than in the testament, he may be fairly regarded as speaking from his heart, describing himself as he really was, or rather —since no man can reach such depths of complete self-knowledge—as he really thought himself to be.

To parallel Napoleon's words about himself we have another autobiography of his day, the recital of his noted Minister of Police, Fouché, later created the Baron of Otranto. Fouché's book might almost be offered as a whimsical parody upon Napoleon; for Fouché claims the honor of having been the brains behind the Emperor. The book is truly colossal in its impudence. It would be worth reading if for nothing else but the amusement of hearing Fouché bombastically appropriate each successive achievement of his master. But the book has a far higher value. No mere coxcomb could have continued to satisfy the Emperor Napoleon. The sinister and deeply dreaded chief-of-police was indeed eyes and ears to his master, and his revelation of police secrets and police methods under the Empire is of universal interest.

Fouché being the earliest born among the autobiographers of this period, opens the present volume; and it is closed by that other perhaps equally celebrated French police official, Vidocq, the most renowned of real detectives that the world has ever known. From Fouché to Vidocq carries us over a wide range both of experience and of character, yet there is something very similar in the two men, in their sinister spirit, their grim daring, their cold treachery. Vidocq was a bold and terrible criminal much feared among his fellows. He had the shrewdness to see how much better was the lot of the policeman than that of the thief, had the strength to dare betray and defy his mates, and had the wit to escape their vengeance while continuing to entrap them.

All our modern detective stories look back to Vidocq as their original; and it is a matter of real worth to mankind that in his old age this bold and clever scoundrel should have been pleased to write his memoirs. No other book gives us such knowledge of the criminal classes of so early a date. Read the horror of the old galley-slave system which first made men brutes and then profited by and encouraged their brutality; see the picture of the boy Vidocq drifting into crime and then enchained there; and you cannot choose but give some honor

to him for the strength with which he burst his bonds and forced himself free from the depths which engulfed all other poor wretches in a hopeless despair. Even scoundrelism may have a bravery and brilliance of a sort; and Vidocq has won perhaps the highest niche in his own poor hall of fame.

An emperor, his jackal, and a galley-slave! What more could autobiography do to show us the France of the age. The Continental Europe that battled against France, we can see best in the autobiography of Prince Metternich. He was the Austrian prime-minister, the ablest of all the diplomats who opposed Napoleon, and the chief organizer of the new Europe which arose from the French conqueror's overthrow. Indeed the years which followed after 1815 and Napoleon's exile, are often called the Age of Metternich. The French had really been defeated by the outraged common people of Germany and other lands; but when the people's victory was won, its rewards were mainly reaped by ancient kings and their revived courts. This was due to the leadership of Metternich, whom the Austrian emperor made a prince for his services. The liberties of the people suffered an eclipse, and Europe entered on a short period of reaction against Democracy.

Metternich's memoirs are therefore famous; his estimates of Napoleon and other contemporaries have become classic. Yet there is a narrowness about all his views, the craftiness of the aged politician shows everywhere in his judgments; and, as men ventured to say even in his own day of repression, if Europe had only been saved from Napoleon to be handed over to Metternich, it might just as well have been left unsaved.

Turn now to the one land which Napoleon could never master nor cajole, which fought him steadfastly through all his wars. Britain, guarded by her fleet, safe in her island home, defied the conqueror of Europe. She had a large part too in his final overthrow; and the Duke of Wellington, victorious at Waterloo, became, as Nelson had been a dozen years before, the idol of his nation. Wellington has left us only a few personal letters from which to estimate the man, so that our volume can show little of him. But of two others of his time and country we have celebrated autobiographies. These are

the poets William Wordsworth and Sir Walter Scott. Scott's story of himself is unfinished. He always meant to complete it, but his busy, busy life and sudden death prevented it. Many a literary work that his generous brain had planned, and even his brave hand begun, was laid aside with the end that released him from his troubles. We have, however, his pictures of his youth; and these bring home to us how different Britain was from the rest of Europe, how cozily the security of her people contrasted with the desolation of Napoleon's "Continent." Narrow as were the seas that separated her from her foes, her isolated semi-security resembled that which America enjoyed to a much later date.

Wordsworth's narrative is far more unusual. He is the one great poet who has united autobiography with poetry and told fully of his own life in verse. His narrative therefore stands unique as a great work of art. The life it pictures resembles that of Scott in its British peacefulness; but the poem does not pause with such superficial autobiography. Wordsworth looks deep into his own heart and understands himself as few men have done. It is not his material and bodily development that the poem depicts, but his spiritual growth.

In that growth the French Revolution took its part. Unlike Goethe, the earlier great poet who could look well-nigh unmoved upon the upheavals of the people, Wordsworth was Democracy's devoted lover. He even sought to lend his aid to the French democrats, but became so horrified by their excesses that he was almost driven to repudiate their principles. Indeed the general attitude of Britain's most honored thinkers as they watch these first struggles of Democracy both in America and France, is well typified by Wordsworth's dubious distrust and discontent. Once more let us remember that those whom fortune permits to sit in easy comfort at home have seldom appeared as the reckless leaders of some desperate revolt.

THE "PRELUDE" OF WORDSWORTH

By John Balcom Shaw, D.D., LL.D.

I CONFESS myself an ardent admirer of Wordsworth's "Prelude," and that confession, I am glad to find, brings me into what is far from poor company. While large numbers, from the very beginning, have seen in it little if anything to praise, and a very few like Carlyle and Macaulay have gone so far as to ridicule it, yet a notable minority embracing some of the most illustrious names in all literature has ever received the poem with sincere and outspoken enthusiasm. Scott and Matthew Arnold believed it had outstanding merit. George Eliot discovered in it "full material for a daily liturgy," while Hamilton W. Mabie pronounced it "a human document of the highest interest."

Longfellow's criticism of its frequent commonplaces was just, but what autobiography, whether appearing in poetry or prose, does not become dull and uninteresting at points? Anything else, in the nature of the case, would be contrary to humanity. No autobiography with which I am familiar, however, soars any higher or touches high levels oftener than does the "Prelude," and I venture the opinion that any open-minded person going through it several times must have the experience of Hudson, who, after reading it repeatedly for eighteen years, found his estimate of it each time advanced.

Purely as a literary production, it has rare merit. Its style is as choice as anything in Wordsworth's writings. How like a serene and limpid stream it flows along, each word chosen with such consummate art and each line so rhythmically formed that one passes through book after book without being once offended by a jarring phrase or an awkward cadence. A great literary critic of our time has compared its rhythm to the breathing of the wind through a harp.

Especially noteworthy are its descriptions. A landscape or

sunset, a mountain brook or meadow are so exquisitely portrayed that one is constantly seeing what had never before dawned upon one's vision. According to another great poet, "Nature herself seemed to take the pen out of his hand and to write for him with her own bare, sheer, penetrating power." Equal genius shows itself when he is reporting his impressions of men and affairs. His description of London as he first saw it, of his college life at Cambridge, of his experiences in France during the great Revolution, are not only remarkably true to life, but at the same time brilliantly lighted up with fine touches of the imagination. It is Morley's judgment that the books that deal with the French Revolution "breathe the very spirit of the great catastrophe."

And what apt, sustained similes and metaphors intersperse the poem, so simple that they serve to illume as well as to adorn his thought, and yet so unobtrusive and shaped with so deft a hand that they fit into the poem and contribute to its beauty as so many gems that go to make up a mosaic. The one in Book IV, beginning "As one who hanging down bending from the side of a slow-moving boat," and the cave simile in Book VIII are especially well chosen. Do not such literary excellences alone fully justify that eminent modern authority who ranked the "Prelude" as the greatest long poem in our language next to "Paradise Lost"?

But literary qualities must necessarily take second place in any autobiographic writing. It is here that the personal equation counts for the most, and the "Prelude" seems even greater when submitted to that test. Its psychology and its philosophy are by all odds its two distinguishing features. It is a detailed photograph of the processes of a great poet's mind, or I might better say, perhaps, of the experiences lying back of those processes and giving them character and power.

Poets are ever fond of describing for us their moods, but here is a poem that does what no other in all English literature attempts: it traces its author's inner life back to its tributary sources and discloses with the minutest analysis the effect which nature, friendships, travel, college life and political contacts have had upon his literary work.

Being so rich, so varied, so unique in its psychological content, the "Prelude" becomes a key that will unlock almost

any one of Wordsworth's poems. Whether he writes of some personal friendship, or some glory of nature, or some memorial of travel, it is found to be but a variation of the *motif* appearing here. No one who has really mastered the "Prelude" can dip into Wordsworth anywhere without having some lines of this autobiography recalled to his memory and giving to him a clearer insight into what he is reading.

Nor is the philosophy of the poem less alluring. Huxley denied to nature all pity or tenderness; but here Wordsworth opens up to you a heart pulsating with love everywhere in the material world. His philosophy is outlined at the beginning of Book XIII and ending with these memorable lines:

> "To look with feelings of fraternal love
> Upon the unassuming things that hold
> A silent station in this beauteous world"

That philosophy may be said to consist of deepmost faith and reverence; steadfast optimism and courage; and a conscious, personal, obedient relationship with the Deity as

> . . . . . "a Power
> That is the visible quality and shape
> And image of right reason; that matures
> Her processes by steadfast laws; gives birth
> To no impatient or fallacious hopes,
> No heat of passion or excessive zeal."

This is the lofty spirit pervading the entire poem and proving to the average reader grateful and contagious alike. He cannot follow Wordsworth down to its close without having a new light in his face and a greater spring and courage in his step.

When the three books of the poem that treat of the French Revolution are reached one's respect for Wordsworth's philosophy is immensely increased. The poet's contact with that strange movement at first entangled his sympathies and temporarily dimmed to his sight the star he had been following; but his faith brought him through it all with large rather than lessened sanity and optimism and made him a safer, more dependable guide to follow.

One phase of his philosophy ever coming to the surface is his favorite conception of man's preëxistence made familiar

to readers of Wordsworth by the immortal lines of his great Ode:

> "Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting.
> The soul that rises with us, our life's star,
> Has had elsewhere its setting, and cometh from afar.
> Not in entire forgetfulness,
> Nor yet in utter nakedness,
> But trailing clouds of glory do we come
> From God, who is our home."

Where he may have caught up this idea would be an interesting search to make. Certainly, not from Indian philosophy where it abounds, for, so far as I can make out, he had never been subjected to its influence. Better to suppose, I should say, that it sprang from an introspective scrutiny of his own subconsciousness, for could any one with Wordsworth's soul deeply study his instincts and intuitions without coming to feel that they reached far back into some other existence?

But to me the chief charm of the "Prelude" is its introduction of the reader to the great rich, vital personality of its author. No one can get back into the soul of the poem without falling in love with Wordsworth. His fine humanness everywhere comes into fascinating evidence. Friendship with him was a chaste and holy passion that quite throws its spell over you. His affectionate references to his sister, his fondness for his friend Coleridge, his well-expressed gratitude to the benefactor who befriended him in his impecunious days, carry with them a touch that is not less than a beneficent chrism and make him preëminently "the poet of the spirit of man."

Thus charmed by its literary beauty, uplifted by its ethical ideals, broadened and deepened by its spiritual vision, cheered and steadied by its wholesome philosophy, and captivated and swayed by the wonderful personality regnant throughout the poem, I have gradually come to share the appreciation which Matthew Arnold has put into undying words:

> . . . . "For there was shed
> On spirits that had long been dead,
> Spirits dried up and closely furl'd,
> The freshness of the early world."

JOSEPH FOUCHÉ

NAPOLEON'S MINISTER OF POLICE

1763-1820

(INTRODUCTORY NOTE)

Of all the remarkable careers produced by the French Revolution and the rise of Napoleon, none is more noteworthy than that of Fouché. Joseph Fouché, afterwards Duke of Otranto, Napoleon's famous Minister of Police, first rose to power during the French Revolution as one of the bloodiest advocates of the Republic. But he had no real sympathy with the ideals then actuating France. He was undoubtedly the cleverest egotist produced by the times, and himself declares that he determined to ride on the "whirlwind and direct the storm." He began his public career by demanding the execution of Louis XVI. Later, incurring the enmity of Robespierre, he set himself to accomplish the ruin of this new "tyrant of France." Fouché early foresaw Napoleon's greatness and embraced his cause.

He was at heart an ardent believer in strong government—provided he himself was an active part of that government. Though officially only Minister of the Police, he was an astute political schemer, and not only strengthened Napoleon's power with the French people, but guided him in foreign and domestic crises. His motto, however, was always "Fouché first, and then Napoleon;" and this fact several times led to Fouché's disgrace. Yet Napoleon, appreciating his ability, recalled him whenever affairs appeared threatening.

Never did any man write memoirs more boastful than those of Fouché —more boastful or more untrustworthy. He writes to defend himself to his countrymen, to justify his many changes of side. According to him, Fouché was the one all important person of the French Revolution. He ascribes Napoleon's downfall to the fact that the Emperor was jealous of the immense power and influence of his Minister of Police, and hence dismissed Fouché shortly after marrying Maria Theresa, Grand Duchess of Austria. Thereafter, says Fouché, the Emperor surrounded himself with servile flatterers, ruled entirely according to his personal desires and so incurred the enmity of his own people as well as of foreign nations. Alarmed, facing certain disaster,

he recalled Fouché. But the coalition against Napoleon was too strongly cemented by fear to be destroyed. So Fouché embraced the opportunity to intrigue for the favor of the Bourbons, whose restoration he foresaw. Failing in this, he again embraced the cause of the fugitive from Elba, only to again desert to the Bourbons; this time successfully.

Amid all the meteoric careers due to the changes in France, no man remained so long on the crest of success as Joseph Fouché. Always self-controlled and far-seeing, able to estimate the trend of public opinion far in advance, he owed his success chiefly to his egotism, his absolute indifference to right or wrong, the dictates of conscience, or the impulses of passion. Although consistently sacrificing every moral and political precept to his own personal success, he constantly appeared as the savior of France. And it is true that his power saved not only Paris, but France herself, from much of the disaster and bloodshed which would otherwise have followed the excesses of the Republic and the Empire.

A certain amount of suspicion has always been attached to the authorship of these memoirs. They did not appear until after Fouché's death, and there is no positive evidence that he wrote them. They echo, however, the true style and spirit of the man, and they follow his career with such fullness and accuracy of detail that if not actually his own they must have been prepared by some other police official who had access to Fouché's private papers and used them fully with a keen knowledge both of the man Fouché and of the methods of the French police. The difficulty of finding such an author, other than Fouché's self, has led most critics to accept the memoirs as his own. They are certainly a masterpiece of cunning and conceit, of interwoven truth and trickery, of boldness and of caution. In a word they are Fouché—an intensely interesting human study.

MEMOIRS OF JOSEPH FOUCHÉ, DUKE OF OTRANTO

THE man who, in turbulent and revolutionary times, was solely indebted for the honors and power with which he was invested, and, in short, for his splendid elevation, to his own prudence and abilities; who, at first, elected a national representative, was, upon the reëstablishment of order, an ambassador, three times a minister, a senator, a duke, and one of the principal directors of state affairs; this man would degrade himself if, to answer the calumnies of libelers, he descended to apology or captious refutations: he must use other arms.

This man, then, is myself. Raised by the revolution, I fell from my grandeur, from the effects alone of a counter-revolution, which I had foreseen, and might have warded off, had I not found myself unarmed at the moment of the crisis.

This second fall has exposed me, defenseless, to the clamors of malignity and the insults of ingratitude;—me, who for a long time invested with a mysterious and terrible power, never wielded it but to calm the passions, dissolve factions, and prevent conspiracies;—me, who was never-ceasingly employed in moderating and tempering power, in conciliating and amalgamating the jarring elements and conflicting interests which divided France. No one dares deny that such was my conduct, so long as I exercised any influence in the government or in the councils of the state. What have I, an exile, to oppose to these furious enemies, to this rabble which now persecute me, after having groveled at my feet? Shall I answer them with the cold declamations of the school, or with refined and academic periods? Certainly not. I will confound them by facts and proofs, by a true exposition of my labors, and of my thoughts, both as a minister and a statesman; by the faithful recital of the political events, and the singular circumstances, through which I steered in times of turbulence and violence. This is the object I propose to myself.

From truth I think I have nothing to dread; and even were it so, I would speak it. The time for divulging it has arrived: I will speak it, cost what it may, so that when the tomb covers my mortal remains, my name shall be bequeathed to the judgment of history. It is, however, just that I should appear before its tribunal with these Memoirs in my hand.

And first, let me not be considered responsible for the revolution,—neither for the misdirection of its course, nor the energy of its dictation. I was nothing, I possessed no authority when its first shocks, overturning France, shook Europe to its foundations. Besides, what was this revolution? It is notorious, that previous to the year 1789, presentiments of the destruction of empires had created uneasiness in the monarchy. Empires are not exempted from that universal law which subjects all mundane things to change and decomposition. Has there ever been one whose historical dura-

tion has exceeded a certain number of ages? At most, their greatest longevity may be fixed at twelve or fourteen centuries; whence it may be inferred that a monarchy which had already lasted thirteen hundred years without having received any deadly attack, was not far from a catastrophe. Of what consequence is it, if rising from its ashes and reorganized, it has subjected Europe to the yoke and terror of its arms? Should its power again escape, again will it decline and perish. Let us not inquire what may be the new metamorphoses to which it is destined. The geographical configuration of France ensures us a distinguished part in the ages yet to come. Gaul, when conquered by the masters of the world, remained subjected only for three hundred years. Other invaders are now forging, in the north, the chains which shall enslave Europe. The revolution erected a bulwark which might have arrested them for a time—it was being demolished piecemeal: but though destroyed, it will again be raised, for the present age is powerful; it carries along with it men, parties, and governments.

You who exclaim so furiously against the prodigies of the revolution—you who have gone through it without daring to look upon it—you have submitted to it, and perhaps may submit to it once more.

Who provoked it, and whence did we first see it rise! From the salons of the great, from the cabinets of the ministers. It was invited, provoked, by the parliaments, and by those about the king,—by young colonels, by court mistresses, by pensioned men of letters, whose persons were protected, and sentiments reëchoed by duchesses.

I have seen the nation blush at the depravity of the higher classes, the licentiousness of the clergy, the ignorant blunders of the ministers, and at the picture of the disgusting dissoluteness of the modern Babylon.

Was it not those that were considered the flowers of France, who, for forty years, established a worship in honor of Voltaire and Rousseau? Was it not among the higher classes that the mania of democratical independence, transplanted from the United States into the French soil, first took root? Dreams of a republic were already afloat, while corruption was at its height in the monarchy! Even the example of a

monarch exemplary and strict in his morals could not arrest the torrent. During this demoralization of the upper classes, the nation increased in knowledge and intellect. By continually hearing emancipation represented as a duty, it at length believed it as such. History itself can here attest that the nation was unacquainted with the arts which prepared the catastrophe. It might have been made to have advanced with the times; the King, and all men of intellect desired it. But the corruption and avarice of the great, the errors of the magistrates and of the court, and the mistakes of the ministry, dug the pit of destruction. It was, besides, so easy to urge to extremities a petulant and inflammable nation, one which, on the slightest provocation, would rush into excesses! Who fired the train? Did the Archbishop of Sens, did Necker the Swiss, Mirabeau, La Fayette, D'Orleans, Adrian Duport. Chauderlos Laclos, the Staëls, the Larochefoucaulds, the Beauveaus, the Montmorencys, the Noailles, the Lameths, the La-Tour du Pin, the Lefrancs de Pompignan, and so many other promoters of the triumphs of 1789 over the royal authority—did these belong to the *tiers-état?* But for the meetings of the Palais Royal and Mont Rouge, the Breton Club had been harmless. There would have been no 14th of July, if on the 12th the troops and generals of the King had done their duty. Besenval was a creature of the Queen's; and Besenval, at the decisive moment, in spite of the King's orders, sounded a retreat, instead of advancing against the insurgents. Marshal Broglie himself was paralyzed by his staff. These are incontrovertible facts.

It is well known by what arts the common people were roused to insurrection. The sovereignty of the people was proclaimed by the defection of the army and the court. Is it surprising, that the factious and their leaders should have got the revolution into their hands? The impulse of innovation, and the exaltation of ideas, did the rest.

The revolution was commenced by a prince who might have mastered it, changing the dynasty, but his cowardice permitted it to proceed at random, and without an object. In the midst of this storm, some generous hearts and enthusiastic spirits, joined with some strong minds, sincerely imagined that a social regeneration was practicable, and, trusting to

protestations and oaths, employed themselves in its accomplishment.

It was under these circumstances that we, obscure men of the *tiers-état,* and inhabitants of the provinces, were carried away and seduced by the dreams of liberty, by the intoxicating fiction of the restoration of the state. We pursued a chimera with the fever of the public good; we had, at that time, no secret objects, no ambition, no views of sordid interest.

Opposition, however, soon inflaming the passions, party spirit gave rise to implacable animosities. Everything was carried to extremities. The multitude alone then gave the impulse. For the same reason that Louis XIV. had said, "I am the state," the people said, "We are the sovereign; the nation is the state;"—and the nation went alone.

And here, let us remark a fact which will serve as a key to the events which will follow; for these events approach to the wonderful. The dissentient royalists, and the counter-revolutionists, for want of ready materials for a civil war, and disappointed of the honors they might have gathered in it, had recourse to emigration, the resource of the weak. Finding no support at home, they ran to seek it abroad. After the example of what other nations had done in similar circumstances, the French nation decreed that the property of the emigrants should be sequestrated, because they had armed against France, and were calling all Europe to arms. But how could the rights of property, the foundation of monarchy, be touched without sapping the basis of the throne? Sequestration led to spoliation; and from that moment the whole mass fell; for the mutation of property is synonymous with the subversion of the established order of things. It was not I who said, "Property must go into other hands!" This sentence was more Agrarian than all that the Gracchi could have uttered, and no Scipio Nasica was found.

From that moment the revolution was nothing but a scene of total disorganization. The terrible sanction of war was wanting to it; and the European cabinets, of their own accord, opened the temple of Janus. From the commencement of this great contest, the revolution, full of youth and ardor, triumphed over the old political system, over a des-

picable coalition, and over the contemptible operations of its armies and their discord.

Another fact must also be adduced, in order to draw from it an important inference. The first coalition was repulsed, beaten, and humiliated. But let us suppose that it had triumphed over the patriotic confederacy of France; that the arms of the Prussians in Champagne had met with no serious check as far even as the capital; and that the revolution had been disorganized in its very focus: admitting this hypothesis, France would certainly have shared the fate of Poland, by a dismemberment, and by the degradation of its sovereign; for such was at that time the political theme of the cabinets and the spirit of their co-partnership diplomacy. The *progress of knowledge* had not yet introduced the discovery of the European confederacy, of military occupation, with subsidies. By preserving France, the patriots of 1792 not only rescued her from the hands of foreigners, but labored, though unintentionally, for the restoration of the monarchy. This is incontestible.

Much outcry has been made against the excesses of this sanguinary revolution. Could it remain calm and temperate when surrounded by enemies and exposed to invasion? Many were mistaken, but few were criminal. The cause of the 10th of August is alone to be ascribed to the advance of the combined Austrians and Prussians. If they came too late, it matters little. The suicide of France was not yet near at hand.

Undoubtedly, the revolution was violent, and even cruel in its progress; all this is historically known, nor shall I dwell upon it, such not being the object of these memoirs. It is of myself I wish to speak, or rather of the events in which I was concerned as a minister of state; but it was necessary that I should introduce the subject and describe the character of the times. Let not the generality of my readers suppose that I shall tediously recite my domestic life as a private individual or obscure citizen. Of what advantage would it be to know the first steps of my career? Minutiæ such as these can only interest the famished compilers of contemporaneous biography, or the gulls who read them; they have nothing to do in common with history, and it is to the dignity of history that my narrative aspires.

My being the son of a shipowner, and having been at first destined for the sea, can be of little consequence; my family was respectable. It is also of little interest to know—that I was brought up among the Pères de l'Oratoire, that I became a member of that College, that I devoted myself to teaching, and that the revolution found me prefect of that college of Nantes; it may, at least, be inferred that I was neither an ignoramus nor a fool. It is, likewise, entirely false that I was ever a priest or had taken orders. I make this remark to show that I was perfectly at liberty to become a free-thinker or a philosopher without being guilty of apostacy; certain it is that I quitted the oratory before I exercised any public functions, and that, under the sanction of the law, I married at Nantes, with the intention of exercising the profession of an advocate, which was much more consonant to my own inclinations and to the state of society. Besides, I was morally what the age was, with the advantage of being so, neither from imitation nor infatuation, but from reflection and disposition. With such principles, is it no subject of self-congratulation to have been nominated by my fellow-citizens, without the employment either of artifice or intrigue, a representative of the people at the National Convention?

It is in this political defile that your rats of the minister's antechamber wait to attack me. There are no exaggerations, no excesses, no crimes, either in mission or in the tribune, with which they have not loaded my historical responsibility, taking words for actions, and forced speeches for principles; neither taking into the account, time, place, nor circumstance; and making no allowance for a universal delirium, for the republican fever, of which twenty millions of Frenchmen felt the paroxysms.

At first I buried myself in the committee of public instruction, where I became acquainted with Condorcet, and through him with Vergniaud. A circumstance relating to one of the most important crises of my life must here be mentioned. By a singular chance, I had been acquainted with Maximilian Robespierre, at the time I was professor of philosophy in the town of Arras, and had even lent him money, to enable him to take up his abode in Paris when he

was appointed deputy to the National Assembly. When we again met at the Convention, we, at first, saw each other frequently; but the difference of our opinions, and perhaps the still greater dissimilarity of our dispositions, soon caused a separation.

One day, at the conclusion of a dinner given at my house, Robespierre began to declaim with much violence against the Girondins, particularly abusing Vergniaud, who was present. I was much attached to Vergniaud, who was a great orator, and a man of unaffected manners. I went round to him, and advancing towards Robespierre, said to him, "Such violence may assuredly enlist the passions on your side, but will never obtain for you esteem and confidence." Robespierre, offended, left the room; and it will shortly be seen how far this malignant man carried his animosity against me.

I had, however, no share in the political system of the Gironde party, of which Vergniaud was the reputed leader. I thought that the effect of this system would be to disunite France, by stirring up the greater portion of the people of the provinces against Paris. In this I foresaw great danger, being convinced that there was no safety for the state but in the unity and indivisibility of the body politic. This was what induced me to enter a faction whose excesses I inwardly detested, and whose violences marked the progress of the revolution. What horrors were committed in the names of Morality and Justice! But, it must be admitted, we were not sailing in peaceful seas.

The revolution was at its height. We were without rudder, without government, ruled by only one assembly, a species of monstrous dictatorship, the offspring of confusion, and which alternately presented a counterpart of the anarchy of Athens and the despotism of the Ottoman.

It is here, then, that the revolution and the counter-revolution are politically at issue. Is the question to be decided by the laws which regulate the decisions of criminal tribunals? The convention, notwithstanding its internal divisions and its furious decrees, or, perhaps, by those very decrees, saved the country beyond its integral limits. This is an incontestable fact, and, in this respect, I do not deny my par-

ticipation in its labors. Each of its members, when accused before the tribunal of history, may confine himself to the limits of Scipio's defense, and say with that great man, "I have saved the republic—let us ascend to the capitol to thank the gods!"

There was, however, one vote which remains unjustifiable; I will even avow, without shame or without weakness, that it has caused me to know remorse. But I call the God of Truth to witness, that it was far less against the monarch that I aimed the blow (for he was good and just) than against the crown, at that time incompatible with the new order of things. I will also add, for direct avowals must now supersede the shadows of disclosure, that it then appeared to me, as to so many others, that we could not inspire the representatives, and the mass of the people, with an energy sufficient to surmount the difficulties of the crisis, but by abandoning everything like moderation, breaking through all restraint, and involving all the leading men of the revolution in its progress. Such was the reason of state which appeared to us to require this frightful sacrifice. In politics, even atrocity itself may sometimes produce a salutary effect.

The world would not now call us to account if the tree of liberty, having taken strong and firm root, had resisted the ax wielded even by those who had planted it with their own hands. That Brutus was more fortunate in erecting the noble edifice which he besprinkled with his children's blood, I can, as a thinking man, conceive; it was far more easy for him to have placed the fasces of the monarchy in the hands of the aristocracy already organized. The representatives of 1793, by sacrificing the representative of royalty, the father of the monarchy, for the purpose of founding a republic, had no choice as to the means of reconstruction. The level of equality was already so violently established in the nation, that the authority was necessarily intrusted to a floating democracy: it could only work upon a moving sand. After having condemned myself as judge and accused, let me, at least, be allowed to avail myself, in the exercise of my conventional duties, of some extenuating circumstances. Being dispatched upon a mission into the departments, forced to employ the language of the times and to yield to the fatality

of circumstances, I found myself compelled to put in execution the law against suspected persons. This law ordered the imprisonment, *en masse,* of priests and nobles. The following is what I wrote, the following is what I dared to publish, in a proclamation issued on the 25th of August, 1793:—

"The law wills that suspected persons should be removed from social intercourse; this law is commanded by the interests of the state: but, to take for the basis of your opinions vague accusations, proceeding from the vilest passions, would be to favor a tyranny as repugnant to my own heart as it is to natural equity. The sword must not be wielded at random. The law decrees severe punishments, and not proscriptions, as immoral as they are barbarous."

It required at that time some courage to mitigate as much as was in one's power the rigor of the conventional decrees. I was not so fortunate in those missions in which I was only one member of a collective authority, because the power of decision was not intrusted to myself alone. Throughout my missions, the actions which may be considered as deserving of censure will be found far less than the every-day phrases, expressed in the language of the times, and which in a period of greater tranquillity still inspire a kind of dread; besides, this language was, so to speak, official and established. Let not also my situation at this period be mistaken. I was the delegate of a violent assembly, and I have already proved that I eluded or softened down several of its severe measures. In other respects, these pretended pro-consulates reduced the missionary deputy to be nothing more than a man-machine, the itinerant commissary of the committees of public safety and general security. I was never a member of these government committees; therefore I never held, during the reign of terror, the helm of power; on the contrary, as will shortly be seen, I was myself a sufferer by it. This will prove how much my responsibility was confined.

But let us unwind the thread of these events. Like that of Ariadne, it will conduct us out of the labyrinth; and we can then attain the object of these memoirs, the sphere of which will increase in importance.

The paroxysm of revolution and of terror was at hand. The guillotine was the only instrument of government. Sus-

picion and mistrust preyed upon every heart; fear cowered over all. Even those who held in their hands the instrument of terror, were at times menaced with it. One man alone in the convention appeared to enjoy an inexpugnable popularity: this was Robespierre, a man full of pride and cunning; an envious, malignant, and vindictive being, who was never satiated with the blood of his colleagues; and who, by his capacity, steadiness, the clearness of his head, and the obstinacy of his character, surmounted circumstances the most appalling. Availing himself of his preponderance in the committee of public safety, he openly aspired, not only to the tyranny of the decemviri, but to the despotism of the dictatorship of Marius and Sylla. One step more would have given him the masterdom of the revolution, which it was his audacious ambition to govern at his will; but thirty victims more were to be sacrificed, and he had marked them out in the convention. He well knew that I understood him; and I, therefore, was honored by being inscribed upon his tablets at the head of those doomed to destruction.

I was still on a mission when he accused me of oppressing the patriots and tampering with the aristocracy. Being recalled to Paris, I dared to call upon him from the tribune, to make good his accusation. He caused me to be expelled from the Jacobins, of whom he was the high-priest; this was for me equivalent to a degree of proscription. I did not trifle in contending for my head, nor in long and secret deliberations with such of my colleagues as were threatened with my own fate. I merely said to them, among others to Legendre, Tallien, Dubois de Crancé, Daunou, and Chénier: "You are on the list, you are on the list as well as myself; I am certain of it!" Tallien, Barras, Bourdon de l'Oise, and Dubois de Crancé evinced some energy. Tallien contended for two lives, of which one was then dearer to him than his own: he therefore resolved upon assassinating the future dictator, even in the convention itself. But what a hazardous chance was this! Robespierre's popularity would have survived him, and we should have been immolated to his manes. I therefore dissuaded Tallien from an isolated enterprise, which would have destroyed the man, but preserved his system.

Convinced that other means must be resorted to, I went straight to those who shared with Robespierre the government of terror, and whom I knew to be envious or fearful of his immense popularity. I revealed to Collot d'Herbois, to Carnot, to Billaud de Varennes, the designs of the modern Appius, and I presented to each of them separately, so lively and so true a picture of the danger of their situation, I urged them with so much address and good fortune, that I insinuated into their breasts more than mistrust—the courage of henceforth opposing the Tyrant in any further decimating of the convention. "Count the votes," said I to them, "in your committee, and you will see, that when you are determined, he will be reduced to the powerless minority of a Couthon and a St. Just. Refuse him your votes, and compel him to stand alone by your *vis inertiæ.*"

But what contrivances, what expedients were necessary to avoid exasperating the Jacobin club, the *Seides,*[1] and the partisans of Robespierre! Sure of having sown the seed, I had the courage to defy him, on the 20th Prairial (June 8, 1794), a day on which, actuated with the ridiculous idea of solemnly acknowledging the existence of the Supreme Being, he dared to proclaim himself both his *will* and *agent,* in presence of all the people assembled at the Tuileries. As he was ascending the steps of his lofty tribune, whence he was to proclaim his manifesto in favor of God, I predicted to him aloud (twenty of my colleagues heard it), that his fall was near. Five days after, in full committee, he demanded my head and that of eight of my friends, reserving to himself the destruction of twenty more at a later period. How great was his astonishment, and what was his rage, upon finding amongst the members of the committee an invincible opposition to his sanguinary designs against the national representation! It has already been too much mutilated, said they to him, and it is high time to put a stop to a deliberate and progressive cutting-down, which at last will include ourselves.

Finding himself in a minority, he withdrew, choked with

[1] This is an allusion to a character in Voltaire's *Fanatisme,* whose name, Seide, has become synonymous with the satellite of a tyrant, or the devotee of an impostor.—*English Editor.*

rage and disappointment, swearing never to set foot again in the committee so long as his will should be opposed. He immediately sent for St. Just, who was with the army, rallied Couthon under his sanguinary banner, and by his influence over the revolutionary tribunal, still made the convention, and all those who were operated on by fear, to tremble. Being confident of the support of the Jacobin club, of Henriot, the commander of the national guard, and of all the revolutionary committees of the capital, he flattered himself that he had still adherents fully sufficient to carry him through. By thus keeping himself at a distance from the den of power, he was desirous of throwing upon his adversaries the general execration of making them appear as the sole perpetrators of so many murders, and of delivering them up to the vengeance of a nation which now began to murmur at the shedding of so much blood. But cowardly, mistrustful, and timid, he was incapable of action, and permitted five weeks to pass away between this secret secession, and the crisis which was silently approaching.

My eye was on him; and seeing him reduced to a single faction, I secretly urged such of his enemies who still clung to the committee, at least to remove the artillery from Paris, who were all devoted to Robespierre and the *Commune*, and to deprive Henriot of his command, or at least to suspend him. The first measure I obtained, thanks to the firmness of Carnot, who alleged the necessity of sending reinforcements of artillery to the army. As to depriving Henriot of his command, that appeared too hazardous; Henriot remained, and was near losing all, or rather, to speak the truth, it was he, who on the 9th Thermidor (27th July) ruined the cause of Robespierre, the triumph of which was for a short time in his power. But what could be expected from a drunken and stupid *ci-devant* footman.

What follows is too well known for me to dwell upon it. It is notorious how Maximilian the First perished; a man whom certain authors have compared to the Gracchi, to whom he bore not the slightest resemblance, either in eloquence or elevation of mind. I confess that in the delirium of victory, I said to those who thought that his views tended to the dictatorship, "You do him too much honor; he had

neither plan, nor design: far from disposing of futurity, he was drawn along, and did but obey an impulse he could neither oppose nor govern.'' But at that time I was too near a spectator of events justly to appreciate their history.

The sudden overthrow of the dreadful system which suspended the nation between life and death, was doubtless a grand epoch of liberty; but in this world good is ever mixed with evil. What took place after Robespierre's fall? that which we have seen to have been the case after a fall still more memorable. Those who had crouched most abjectly before the decemvir, could, after his death, find no expression strong enough to express their detestation of him.

It was soon a subject of regret, that so happy an event had not been made to contribute to the public good, instead of serving as a pretext to glut the hatred and vengeance of those who had been sufferers by the revolution. To terror succeeded anarchy, and to anarchy reaction and vengeance. The revolution was blasted both in its principles and end; the patriots were for a long time exposed to the fury of the assassins, enlisted in companies of the Sun and of Jesus. I had escaped the proscription of Robespierre, but I could not that of the reactors. They pursued me even into the convention, whence, by dint of recriminations and false accusations, they caused my expulsion by a most iniquitous decree; for nearly a year, I was the victim of every species of insult and odious persecution.

It was then I learnt to reflect upon man, and upon the character of factions. I was compelled to wait (for with us there is nothing but extremes)—I was compelled to wait till the cup was full, till the excesses of reaction had placed in jeopardy the revolution itself, and the convention *en masse.* Then, and not till then, the convention saw the abyss which yawned under its feet. The crisis was awful—it was a struggle for life or for death. The convention took up arms; the persecution of the patriots was stopped, and the cannon of one day (13th Vendémiaire) restored order among the crowd of counter-revolutionists, who had imprudently risen without chiefs and without any center of object and action.

The cannon of Vendémiaire, directed by Bonaparte, having in some degree restored me to liberty and honor, I con-

fess that I was the more interested in the destiny of this young general, who was clearing for himself a road by which he was soon to arrive at the most astonishing renown of modern times.

In the interval an opportunity presented itself of rendering myself independent as far as fortune was concerned. I had sacrificed my profession and my existence to the revolution; and by an effect of the most unjust prejudices, the field of advancement was closed against me. My friends pressed me to follow the example of several of my former colleagues, who, finding themselves in the same case with myself, had obtained, through the patronage of the directors, shares in the government contracts *(fournitures)*. A company was formed; I was admitted into it, and by the influence of Barras I obtained a share of the contracts.

But we had now recovered from the intoxication of victory. My initiation into state affairs took place at so important a crisis, that it will be necessary to give a sketch of its prominent features; especially as it is a preliminary absolutely indispensable for the clearer comprehension of what follows. In less than one year, the peace of Campo Formio, which had so much deceived the credulous, was already sapped to its basis. Stopping at nothing, we had made a dreadful abuse of the right of the stronger in Helvetia, at Rome, and in the East. For want of kings to attack, we had made war upon the shepherds of Switzerland, and had even started the Mamelukes as our game. It was the expedition into Egypt, in particular, which re-opened all our wounds. The origin of that expedition is sufficiently curious to be noted here.

Bonaparte held our multifarious government in horror, and despised the directory, which he called the five kings in routine *(cinq rois à terme)*. Intoxicated with glory upon his return from Italy, welcomed with almost frantic joy by the French, he meditated seizing upon the supreme government; but his party had not as yet sufficiently established itself. He perceived, and I use his own expression, that *the pear was not yet ripe*. On its side, the directory, who feared him, found that the nominal command of the English expedition kept him too near Paris; and he himself was not much

inclined to seek his destruction against the cliffs of Albion. To say the truth, it was scarcely known what to do with him. Open disgrace would have insulted the public opinion, and increased his strength.

An expedient was thus being sought for, when the ex-bishop of Autun, a man distinguished for his shrewdness and address, and whom the intriguing daughter of Necker had just introduced into the foreign department, conceived the brilliant ostracism into Egypt. He first insinuated the idea to Rewbel, then to Merlin, taking upon himself to obtain the acquiescence of Barras. His plan was nothing but an old idea which he had found amongst the dust of the bureau. It was converted into a state affair. The expedient appeared the more fortunate, as it at once removed the bold and forward general; subjecting him, at the same time, to hazardous chance. The conqueror of Italy at first entered unhesitatingly, and with the greatest ardor, into the idea of an expedition, which not only could not fail adding to his renown, but would also ensure to him distant possessions, which he flattered himself he should govern either as a sultan or a prophet. But soon cooling, whether he perceived the snare, or whether he still aimed at supreme power, he drew back; but it was in vain for him to struggle, to raise obstacle upon obstacle—all were removed; and when he found himself reduced to the alternative of a disgrace, or of remaining at the head of an army which might revolutionize the East, he deferred his designs upon Paris, and set sail with the flower of our troops.

The expedition commenced with a kind of miracle, the sudden taking of Malta; and was succeeded by the fatal catastrophe, of the destruction of our squadron at the mouth of the Nile. The face of affairs immediately changed. England, in its turn, was in the delirium of triumph. In conjunction with Russia, she set on foot a new general war, of which the government of the two Sicilies was the ostensible cause. The torch of war was lighted at Palermo and Naples by hatred; at Constantinople by a violation of the rights of peace, and of nations. The Turk alone had justice on his side.

This second continental war, of which Switzerland, Italy,

and Egypt had only seen the prelude, commenced on the 1st of March; and by the 20th, Jourdan had lost the battle of Stockach, which forced him to repass the Rhine in the greatest precipitation: this gloomy omen was soon followed by the breaking up of the Congress of Rastadt, a political drama, the last act of which was full of horrors. We were not more fortunate in Italy than in Germany: Schœrer, Rewbel's favorite general, lost three battles on the Adige; these deprived us, in a few days, of the liberty of Italy, together with the conquests which had cost us three laborious campaigns. Till then we had either invaded or resisted with firmness: the effect produced by the intelligence that we were retreating on all sides may easily be imagined; every government, which, during a revolution, can only make malcontents, and whose arms are unsuccessful, must necessarily lose its power: upon the first reverses, all the ambitious reassume of course an hostile attitude.

In this respect, our reverses served us admirably; they were inevitable. Could one hundred and sixty thousand men, exhausted and worn out with fatigue, dispirited by repeated defeats, and commanded by generals always liable to be disgraced, make head against more than three hundred thousand enemies, seconded, in Italy and Germany, by the people, and brought, either by the ardor of victory, or the desire of vengeance, upon the frontiers even of the republic?

The dissatisfaction with the majority of the directory soon became general: "It has only," as was observed, "displayed its authority in oppression, injustice, and incapacity: instead of signalizing its dictatorship by some brilliant action, since the 18th Fructidor it has but abused its immense power; it has ruined our finances, and dug the abyss which now threatens to swallow the republic."

The first-fruit of the triumph of the councils over the directory, was the appointment of Joubert to the command of Paris, an appointment obtained from Sieyes by Barras, and in which I also had a hand. A few days afterwards I was appointed to the embassy of Holland: this was a species of reparation, which the new directory owed me.

I had scarcely time to go and present my credentials at the

Hague, where I replaced Lombard de Langres, a kind of affected author, but in other respects a good-natured man. I found this other younger republic divided, as to its authorities, into firm and weak men; into aristocrats and democrats, as everywhere else. I convinced myself that the Orange, or English, party would never have influence upon the destinies of the country, so long as our armies were capable of protecting Holland. There I again met with Brune, who kept our troops firm in their obedience, although, at the same time, he winked at a contraband trade, indispensable to prevent the ruin of the country. I let him do as he pleased; we could not fail understanding each other perfectly; like me, he found himself sufficiently avenged by the overthrow of the unskillful rulers who had injured and expatriated us so *mal-à-propos.*

This arranged, Sieyes perceived that he wanted the springs of a firm and active police. The police, as it was then constituted, naturally favored the popular party, who had introduced into its body several of its creatures and leaders. The worthy Bourguignon, the then minister, owed his elevation to Gohier; but was entirely inadequate to fill such an office, beset with so many difficulties. This was felt, and at the very moment when I had just drawn up for Barras a memorial upon the situation of the home affairs, in which I treated, in its fullest extent, the question of general police, Barras himself joined with Sieyes, in order to dismiss Bourguignon; and, afterwards, with Gohier and Moulins, for the purpose of removing Alquier, Sieyes' candidate, and of calling me into office. I willingly exchanged my embassy for the direction of the police, although the ground on which I was about to tread appeared slippery. I lost no time in taking possession of my post; and on the 1st of August I was installed.

The principal cause of the fall of the crown in 1789 was the incapacity of the high police; the directors of it, at that time, were not able to penetrate the conspiracies and plots which threatened the royal family. The first pledge for the safety of any government whatever is a vigilant police, under the direction of firm and enlightened leaders. The difficulties of the high police are immense, whether it has to operate

in the combinations of a representative government, so incompatible with arbitrary measures, and that leaves to the factious legal arms with which to execute their projects; or whether it acts in behalf of a more concentrated form of government, aristocratical, directorial, or despotic. In the latter case, the task is the more difficult, for nothing transpires from without: it is in obscurity and mystery that traces must be discovered which only present themselves to inquiring and penetrating eyes. I found myself in the former case, with the double duty of discovering and dissolving the coalitions and legal oppositions against the established power, as well as the dark plots of royalists and foreign agents. The danger from these last was far less immediate.

I raised myself mentally above my functions, and felt not the least fear at their importance. In two hours I fully understood all my official duties. I did not, however, fatigue myself with considering the ministry intrusted to me in its minor details of arrangement. As things were situated, I felt that all the powers and abilities of a minister must be absorbed in the high police; the rest might safely be left to the *chefs de bureau.* My only study was, therefore, to seize with a steady and sure hand all the springs of the secret police, and all the elements composing it.

I first insisted that, for these essential reasons, the local police of Paris, called the *bureau central* (the prefecture did not then exist), should be placed entirely under my control. I found all the constituent elements in the most deplorable state of confusion and decay. The treasury was empty; and without money, no police. I had soon money at my command, by making the vice inseparable from all great cities contribute to the safety of the state. My first act was to put a stop to a tendency to insubordination, in which some of the *chefs de bureau,* belonging to active factions, indulged themselves, but I judged it necessary not to introduce hasty reforms or ameliorations in the details.

I confined myself, simply, to concentrating the high police within my own cabinet, with the assistance of an intimate and faithful secretary. I felt that I alone should be judge of the political state of the interior, and that spies and secret agents were only to be considered as indicators and instru-

ments often doubtful: in a word, I felt that the high police was not to be administered by memorials and long reports; that there were means far more efficacious; for example, that the minister himself was to place himself in contact with the leading men, of all opinions and doctrines, and of all the higher classes of society. This system never failed me, and I was better acquainted with the secrets of France by means of oral and confidential communications, and by open conversations, than by the heaps of written rubbish which continually passed under my eyes. Thus, nothing essential to the safety of the state ever escaped me, as will be proved in the sequel.

The greatest obstacles proceeded from amongst ourselves; they were raised by the schism of the revolutionists, divided into the possessors of power and those who wished for places. The latter, impatient and irritated, became more and more exacting and hostile. How could it be hoped to govern and reform the state while the press had too much liberty? Its licentiousness was at its height. "The directory, now nearly royalty," said the *Journal des Hommes Libres,* "has ostensibly sanctioned the massacre of republicans by the speech of its president on the 10th of August, and by its message on the shutting up of political societies."

Upon arriving at the Luxembourg, I found, as I expected, Sieyes and his colleagues exasperated against the journals; I immediately suggested a message, requiring from the councils measures calculated to curb the counter-revolutionary journalists and the libelers. The message was being drawn up, when the first intelligence arrived of the loss of the battle of Novi, and the death of Joubert. The directory was thunder-struck and discouraged. Although overcome with grief myself, I suggested nevertheless that the reins should not be let loose; nothing, however, could be decided on that day. In the circumstances in which we were placed, the loss of the battle was a disaster, the death of Joubert a calamity. He had set off with special instructions to come to an engagement with the Russians. Unfortunately, the delay of a month, occasioned by his marriage with Mlle. de Montholon, had given the enemy time to reinforce himself, and to oppose to our army more formidable masses. The

death of Joubert, who was struck down at the first discharge of musketry, and which has justly been deemed suspicious, has never been clearly explained.

I have questioned ocular witnesses respecting the event, who seemed persuaded that the murderous ball was fired from a small cottage, by some hired ruffian, the musketry of the enemy not being within reach of the group of staff-officers, in the middle of which was Joubert, when he came up to encourage the advanced guard, which was giving way. It has even been said, that the shot was fired by a Corsican chasseur of our light troops. But let us not endeavor to unravel a dreadful mystery, by conjectures or facts not sufficiently substantiated. *I leave you Joubert!* said Bonaparte, on setting off for Egypt. I must add, that his valor was heightened by his simplicity of manners and his disinterestedness, and that in him a correct *coup d'œil* was found, united with rapidity of execution—a cool head with a warm heart. And this warrior was just snatched from us, perhaps by means of the secret machinations of guilt, at the moment when he might have raised and saved the country!

Two sudden events saved us. First, the battle of Zurich, gained by Massena on the 25th of September, who, by again defeating the Russians, and by preserving our frontier, permitted us to linger on without any crisis at home till the 16th of October, the day on which Bonaparte, who had landed on the 9th at Fréjus, made his entry into Paris, after having violated the laws of quarantine, so essential to the preservation of the public health.

Here let us pause an instant. The course of human events is, doubtless, subjected to an impulse which is derived from certain causes, the effects of which are inevitable. Imperceptible to the vulgar, these causes strike either more or less the statesman; he discovers them either in certain signs, or in fortuitous incidents, whose inspirations enlighten and direct him. What follows happened to me five or six weeks before Bonaparte's landing. I was informed that two persons, employed in the *bureau de police,* discussing the state of affairs, had said that Bonaparte would be soon seen again in France. I traced this remark to its source, and found it to have no other origin than one of those gleams of

the mind which may be considered as a species of involuntary foresight. This idea made its impression upon me. I soon learned from some persons about Lucien and Joseph, what were their real thoughts on the subject. They were persuaded that, if their letters and packets arrived in Egypt, in spite of the British cruisers, Bonaparte would do his utmost to return; but the chances appeared to them so uncertain and hazardous, that they dared not trust to them. Réal, one of Bonaparte's secret correspondents, went still further; he owned to me his hopes. I imparted them to Barras, but found him without any decided opinion upon the matter.

As to myself, concealing the discoveries I had made, I made several advances, both to the two brothers and to Josephine, with the view of making both families favorable; they were divided. I found Josephine much more accessible. It is well known by what ill-judged profusion she perpetuated the disorder and the embarrassments of her affairs: she was always without money. The income of forty thousand francs, secured to her by Bonaparte before his departure, was insufficient for her; independent of two extra remittances, amounting together to the same sum, which had been sent her from Egypt, in less than one year. Besides this, Barras having recommended her to me, I had included her in the number of those who had a share in the secret distribution made of the funds arising from taxes on gambling houses. I gave her, with my own hands, one thousand louis, a ministerial compliment which more than all rendered her favorable to me. Through her I obtained much information, for she saw all Paris; with Barras, however, she was reserved; but she was more intimate with Gohier, at that time president of the directory, and whose lady she admitted into her society; she complained much, at the same time, of her brothers-in-law, Joseph and Lucien, with whom she was on very bad terms. The information I obtained from different quarters, at length, convinced me that Bonaparte would suddenly burst upon us; I was, therefore, prepared for this event, at the time when it struck every one with surprise.

There would have been no great merit in coming to take possession of an immense power, which was offered to the

most enterprising, and of gathering the fruits of an enterprise in which, to succeed, the display of audacity was alone requisite; but, to abandon a victorious army, to pass through hostile fleets, to arrive in the very nick of time, hold all parties in suspense, and decide for the safest—to weigh, balance, and master everything in the midst of so many contrary interests and opposing passions, and all this in twenty-five days, supposes wonderful ability, a firm character, and prompt decision. To enter into the details of the short interval between the arrival of Bonaparte and the 18th Brumaire, would fill a volume, or, rather, require the pen of a Tacitus.

Bonaparte, with much adroitness, had caused his arrival to be preceded by that of the bulletin announcing the victory of Aboukir. It had not escaped my notice, that, in certain coteries, people published it with a degree of earnestness, and even had recourse to puffing and hyperbole. Since the last dispatches from Egypt, much more activity and cheerfulness were perceptible at Josephine's and her brothers'-in-law.

"Ah! if he should arrive!" said Josephine to me; "it is not impossible: should he have received the news of our disasters in time, nothing would prevent his flying hither to repair and save all!"

A fortnight had scarcely elapsed after hearing these words, and Bonaparte suddenly landed. The most lively enthusiasm was excited on his passing through Aix, Avignon, Valence, Vienne, and especially Lyon: it seemed as if the universal feeling was that a chief was wanting, and that that chief had arrived under auspices the most fortunate. Upon being announced at Paris, in the theaters, the intelligence produced an extraordinary sensation, a universal delirium of joy. No doubt there was something factitious in all this, some concealed impelling power; but the general opinion cannot be commanded, and certainly it was very favorable to this unexpected return of a great man. From this moment, he appeared to consider himself as a sovereign who had been received in his dominions.

The directory, at first, felt a secret vexation, and the republicans, from instinct, were much alarmed. A deserter from the army of the east, and an infractor of the quarantine

laws, Bonaparte would have been crushed by a firm government. But the directory, witnessing the general delirium, dared not punish: it was besides divided. How could the directors agree upon so important an affair, without a unanimity of views and intentions? The very next day, Bonaparte repaired to the Luxembourg, to render an account, in a private sitting, of the situation in which he had left Egypt. There, endeavoring to excuse his sudden return, by expressing a determination to share and avert the dangers of the country, he swore to the directory, grasping at the same time the pommel of his sword, that it should never be drawn but in defense of the republic and its government. The directory appeared convinced—so disposed was it to deceive itself.

It was after this conference that the first meetings of the deputies were held sometimes at Le Mercier's, and sometimes at Fregeville's. Who would credit it? Bonaparte had at first his own brother Lucien against him.

"You know him not," said he to them who wished to entrust him with the entire direction of the movement which was in agitation; "you know him not; once there, he will think himself in his camp; will command everything, and be everything."

But eight days after, Lucien's coöperation was warm and powerful. With him as with so many others, the republican suspicion could not resist the tempting bait of riches and honors.

It has been asserted, that I took no part whatever in these salutary plots; that I had temporized, but that I had gathered the fruits of them with the greatest dexterity. Certainly, the moment in which I am now writing is not favorable for laying claim to the honor of having contributed to Bonaparte's elevation; but I have promised the truth, and I feel a satisfaction in telling it, superior to all the calculations of vanity, and all the disappointments of deceived hopes.

The revolution of St. Cloud would have failed had I opposed it; it was in my power to mislead Sieyes, put Barras on his guard, and enlighten Gohier and Moulins; I had only to back Dubois de Crancé, the only opposing minister, and the whole would have fallen to the ground. But it would have been stupidity in me not to have preferred

some future prospects to an unpromising blank. My ideas were fixed. I considered Bonaparte as alone capable of effecting the political reforms imperiously called for by our manners, vices, extravagances, and excesses, by our disasters, and fatal divisions.

Bonaparte, indeed, was too cunning to let me into the secret of his means of execution, and to place himself at the mercy of a single man. But he said enough to me to win my confidence, and to persuade me, of what I was convinced, that the destinies of France were in his hands.

In two interviews we had at Réal's house, I did not conceal the obstacles he had to surmount. I knew well what embarrassed him: it was to have to contend with republican enthusiasm, to which he could only oppose the moderates or the bayonet. He, at this time, appeared to me, politically speaking, inferior to Cromwell; he had also to dread the fate of Cæsar, without possessing either his fame or his genius.

It was of great importance to neutralize Gohier, president of the directory. With the view, therefore, of the better deceiving him, Bonaparte invited him to dine with him on the 18th, with his wife and brothers. He also caused to be invited to breakfast for the same day, at eight o'clock in the morning, the generals and chiefs of corps; announcing also, that he would receive the visits and respects of the officers of the garrison, and of the adjutants of the national guard, who, since his return, had in vain solicited admission to his presence.

One only obstacle caused uneasiness; this was the integrity of the president, Gohier, who, if undeceived in time, might rally round him all the popular party, and the generals opposed to the conspiracy. Indeed, I was awake to this. However, for better security, it was proposed to draw the president of the directory into a snare. At midnight, Madame Bonaparte sent him, by her son, Eugène Beauharnais, a friendly invitation for himself and his lady to breakfast with her, at eight o'clock in the morning.—"I have," wrote she, "some very important things to communicate to you." But the hour appeared suspicious to Gohier, and, after Eugène's departure, he decided that his wife should go alone.

Already Cornet, the president of the commission of the ancients, was busy in dispatching from his office private invitations to such members as were in the secret, or upon whom he could rely, to assemble at five in the morning. The two commissions of both councils were in permanence. The ostensible meeting of the deputies of the ancients was fixed for ten in the morning, and the assembly of the deputies of the five hundred at twelve. This last council was about to find itself obliged to close the sitting, after the mere reading of the decree of removal, in favor of which votes were already secured in the ancients. I had arranged everything, in order to be informed in time of what took place, either at the commissions, at Bonaparte's, or at the directory.

At eight o'clock in the morning, I learnt that the president of the commission of the ancients, after having formed, by his extraordinary convocation, a fictitious majority, had, upon concluding a long and turgid harangue, in which he represented the republic in the greatest danger, moved to transfer the legislative corps to St. Cloud, and to invest Bonaparte with the chief command of the troops. It was at the same time announced to me, that the decree was about to pass.

I instantly got into my carriage, and going first to the Tuileries, learnt that the decree had been made; and about nine o'clock I arrived at the house of General Bonaparte, the courtyard of which was full of military. Every avenue was filled with officers and generals; and the house was not spacious enough to contain the crowds of his friends and adherents. All the corps of the garrison of Paris and of the military division had sent officers to take his orders. I entered the oval cabinet in which Bonaparte was; he was impatiently awaiting, with Berthier and Lefèvre, the determination of the council of ancients. I announced to him that the decree of removal, which conferred upon him the chief command, had just passed, and that it would be instantly laid before him. I reiterated to him my protestations of devotion and zeal, informing him that I had just closed all the barriers, and stopped the departure of mails and stages.

"All that is useless," said he to me, in presence of several generals who entered: "the numbers of citizens and brave

men around me must sufficiently convince, that I act with, and for, the nation. I shall take care to cause the decree of the council to be respected, and to maintain the public tranquillity." At that instant Josephine came up to him, and told him, with much dissatisfaction, that the president Gohier had sent his wife, but would not come himself.—"Write to him, by Madame Gohier, to come as quick as possible," cried Bonaparte. A few minutes after, the deputy Cornet arrived, quite proud of performing, with the general, the functions of state-messenger. He brought him the decree which placed in his hands the fate of the republic.

Bonaparte, leaving his cabinet immediately, made known to his adherents the decree which invested him with the chief command; then placing himself at the head of the generals, of the superior officers, and of 1,600 cavalry, forming part of the garrison of Paris, which had just been brought him by Murat, he began his march towards the Champs Elysées, after desiring me to ascertain what resolution the directory had adopted upon learning the decree of removal.

I first repaired to my house, where I gave orders for placarding a proclamation, signed by myself, in the spirit of the revolution which had just commenced; I then directed my steps towards the Luxembourg.

It was a little after nine o'clock, and I found Moulins and Gohier, who with Barras formed the majority of the directory, completely ignorant of what was passing in Paris. Madame Tallien, in defiance of the orders given to refuse admission, had entered the apartments of Barras, whom she surprised in the bath; she was the first to inform him that Bonaparte had acted without him. "What can be done?" cried the indolent epicure—"that man (designating Bonaparte by a coarse epithet) has taken us all in." However, in the hope of negotiating, he sent to him his confidential secretary, Botot, modestly to inquire what he might expect from him. Botot found Bonaparte at the head of the troops, and, delivering his message, received this harsh reply—"Tell that man that I will not see him again!" He had just dispatched Talleyrand and Bruix to him, for the purpose of forcing him to resign.

Having entered the apartments of the Luxembourg, I

announced to the president the decree which transferred the sittings of the legislative corps to the Chateau of St. Cloud.—"I am much astonished," said Gohier peevishly to me, "that a minister of the directory should thus transform himself into a messenger of the council of the ancients."

"I considered it," replied I, "a part of my duty to give you intelligence of so important a resolution, and at the same time I thought it expedient to come and receive the orders of the directory." "It was more your duty," rejoined Gohier in a faltering voice, "not to have let us remain in ignorance of the criminal intrigues which have produced such a decree; this is no doubt but the prelude to all that has been plotted against the government in the secret meetings which, in your quality of minister of the police, you ought to have discovered and made known to us." "But," returned I, "numbers of reports have been laid before the directory; I myself, finding I did not possess its confidence, employed indirect means to give it the necessary information; but the directory would never give credit to my warnings; besides is it not by its own members that this blow has been struck? The directors Sieyes and Roger-Ducos are already in coalition with the commission of the inspectors of the ancients." "The majority is at the Luxembourg," replied Gohier vehemently; "and if the directory have any orders to give, it will entrust the execution of them to men worthy of its confidence." Upon this I withdrew, and Gohier lost no time in summoning his two colleagues, Barras and Moulins. I had scarcely got into my carriage, when I saw the messenger of the ancients arrive, bringing to the president the communication of the decree of removal to St. Cloud.

Events already began to develop themselves. Bonaparte on horseback, followed by a numerous staff, first took the road to the Champs Elysées, where several corps were drawn up in battle array. After being acknowledged by them as their general, he proceeded to the Tuileries. The weather was extremely fine, and favored the utmost display of military pomp in the Champs Elysées, on the quays, and in the national garden, which was in a moment transformed into a park of artillery, and where the crowd became excessive.

Bonaparte was greeted at the Tuileries by the shouts of the citizens and the soldiery. Having presented himself with a military suite at the bar of the council of ancients, he eluded taking the constitutional oath; then descending from the château, he came to harangue the troops already disposed to obey him. There, he learnt that the directory was disorganized; that Sieyes and Roger-Ducos had sent in their resignation to the commission of the inspectors of the ancients; and that Barras having been circumvented, and breaking the majority, was on the point of subscribing to the conditions offered him.

Passing on to the commissions of the assembled inspectors, the general there found Sieyes, Roger-Ducos, and several deputies of their party. Gohier, president of the directory, together with his colleague, Moulins, now arrived; both of whom refused their adhesion to what was taking place. An explanation took place between Gohier and Bonaparte. "My plans," said the latter, "are not hostile; the republic is in danger—it must be saved . . . *I will it!*" At this very moment, intelligence arrived that the faubourg Saint Antoine was rising at the instigation of Santerre, who was a relative of Moulins; Bonaparte, turning to him, and questioning him upon the subject, told him "that he would send a detachment of cavalry to shoot Santerre, if he dared to make the least stir."

Moulins removed Bonaparte's apprehensions, and declared that Santerre could not assemble four men round him. He was, in fact, no longer the instigator of the insurrection of 1792. I, myself, repeated the assurance that there would not be the least shadow of popular tumult; and said that I answered for the tranquillity of Paris.

Gohier and Moulins, finding that the impulse was given, that the movement was irresistible, reëntered the Luxembourg to witness the defection of their guards. Both were there soon besieged by Moreau; for Bonaparte had already made certain military arrangements which placed in his power all the public authorities and establishments. Moreau was sent with a detachment to invest the Luxembourg; General Lannes was intrusted with a corps to guard the legislative body; Murat was dispatched in all haste to occupy St. Cloud; while

Serrurier was in reserve at the Point-du-Jour. All proceeded without any obstacle, or, at least, no opposition manifested itself in the capital; where, on the contrary, the revolution appeared to meet with general approbation.

In the evening a council was held at the commission of the inspectors, either for the purpose of preparing the public mind for the events which the next day was to produce, or to determine upon what was to be done at St. Cloud. I was present; and saw there, for the first time, undisguised, and in presence of each other, the two parties now united for the same object; but one of which appeared already to be alarmed at the ascendency of the military faction. At first, much discussion took place without understanding each other, and without coming to any determination. All that Bonaparte himself proposed, or that his brothers proposed for him, smacked of the dictatorship of the saber. The legislators who had embraced his cause, took me aside, and made me the remark. "But," said I to them, "it is done; the military power is in the hands of General Bonaparte; you, yourselves, invested him with it, and you cannot proceed a step without his sanction."

I soon perceived that the majority would willingly have receded, but they had no longer the power of so doing. The most timorous separated themselves; and when we had got rid of the fearful, and those we could not depend upon, the establishment of three provisionary consuls was agreed upon, namely: Bonaparte, Sieyes, and Roger-Ducos. Sieyes then proposed to arrest about forty of the leaders who were hostile, or imagined to be so. I advised Bonaparte, through St. Réal, not to consent to it; and, in his first steps in the road to supreme power, not to render himself the instrument of the fury of a vindictive priest. He understood me, and alleged that the idea was premature; that there would be neither opposition nor resistance.

"You will see that to-morrow at St. Cloud," said Sieyes, rather piqued.

The next day (19th Brumaire, 10th November, 1799), at an early hour, the road from Paris to St. Cloud was covered with troops, officers on horseback, spectators, coaches full of deputies, functionaries, and journalists. The hall for the two

councils had just been hastily prepared. It was soon perceived, that the military party in the two councils was reduced to a small number of deputies, more or less ardent for the new order of things.

I remained at Paris, seated in my cabinet, with all my police in permanence; observing all that passed, receiving and examining myself every report which arrived. I had detached to St. Cloud a certain number of able and intelligent emissaries, for the purpose of placing themselves in contact with the persons who were pointed out to them; and other agents, who, being relieved every half-hour, came to inform me of the posture of affairs. I was thus made acquainted with the least incident, the most trifling circumstance that could affect the expected *dénouement;* I was decidedly of the opinion that the sword alone could cut this hard knot.

The sitting opened at the five hundred, over which Lucien Bonaparte presided, by an artful speech of Emile Gaudin; the object of which was the appointment of a commission charged to present an immediate report upon the situation of the republic. Emile Gaudin, in his pre-arranged motion, also required that no measures whatever should be determined upon till the report of the proposed commission had been heard. Boulay de la Meurthe held the report in his hand, already prepared.

Scarcely, however, had Emile Gaudin concluded his motion, than a most dreadful tumult agitated the whole assembly. The cries of *Long live the Constitution! No Dictatorship! Down with the Dictator!* were heard on all sides. Upon the motion of Delbrel, seconded and supported by Grandmaison, the assembly, rising in a body at the cry of *Long live the Republic!* resolved that they would renew individually the oath of fidelity to the constitution. Those even who had come for the professed object of destroying it, took the oath.

The hall of the ancients was almost equally agitated; but there the party of Sieyes and Bonaparte, who were anxious to accelerate the establishment of a provisionary government, had asserted as a fact, upon a false declaration of the Sieur Legarde, chief secretary of the directory, that all the directors had sent in their resignation. The oppositionists immedi-

ately demanded that successors should be named according to the prescribed forms.

Bonaparte, informed of this double storm, thought it was time to appear upon the stage. Crossing the Salon de Mars, he entered the council of the ancients. There, in a verbose and disjointed speech, he declared that there was no longer any government, and that the constitution could no longer save the republic. Conjuring the council to hasten to adopt a new order of things, he protested that with respect to the magistracy they should appoint, his only wish was to be the arm commissioned to maintain and execute the orders of the council.

This speech, of which I only give the substance, was delivered in a broken and incoherent manner, which fully testified the agitation the general suffered, who sometimes addressed himself to the deputies, and then turned towards the soldiery, who remained at the end of the hall. Cries of *Long live Bonaparte,* and the acquiescence of the majority of the ancients having given him fresh courage, he withdrew, hoping to make a like impression upon the other council. He was not without some apprehensions, knowing what had passed there, and with what enthusiasm they had sworn fidelity to the republican constitution. A message to the directory had just been decreed there. A motion was being made to require from the ancients an explanation of the motives of its removal to St. Cloud, when they received the resignation of the director Barras transmitted to them by the other council. This resignation, of which, till then, they had been ignorant, caused a great astonishment throughout the assembly. It was considered as the result of some deep-laid intrigue.

At the very moment the question was being discussed whether the resignation was legal and according to the forms, Bonaparte arrived, followed by a platoon of grenadiers. Followed by four of them, he advanced, leaving the others at the entrance of the hall. Encouraged by the reception he had met with from the ancients, he flattered himself with the hope of calming the republican fever which agitated the five hundred. Scarcely, however, had he entered the hall, when the assembly were thrown into the utmost disorder.

All the members standing up, expressed in loud cries the effect produced upon them by the appearance of the bayonets and of the general who thus advanced armed into the temple of the legislature. "You are violating the sanctuary of the laws, withdraw instantly!" exclaimed several deputies. "What are you doing, rash man?" cried Bigonnet to him. "Is it then for this you have been a conqueror?" said Destrem. In vain Bonaparte, who had ascended the tribune, endeavored to stammer out a few sentences. On all sides he heard the cries repeated of *Long live the Constitution! Long live the Republic!* On all sides he was saluted by cries of *Down with the Cromwell! Down with the Dictator! Down with the Tyrant! Away with the Dictator!*

Some of the most enraged deputies rushed upon him and pushed him back. "Will you then wage war against your own country?" cried Arena to him, showing him the point of his dagger. The grenadiers, seeing their general grow pale and tremble, crossed the room to form a rampart around him; Bonaparte threw himself in their arms, and they carried him away. Thus rescued, and almost frantic, he remounted his horse, set off at a gallop, and riding towards the bridge of Saint Cloud, cried aloud to his soldiers, "They have attempted my life! they have proposed to put me out of the protection of the laws! they do not know, then, that I am invulnerable, that I am the god of thunder."

Murat having joined him on the bridge, "It is not fitting," said he to him, "that he who has triumphed over such powerful enemies should fear drivelers. . . . Come, general, courage, and the victory is our own!" Bonaparte then turned his horse's head and again presented himself before the soldiers, endeavoring to excite the generals to bring matters to a conclusion by a *coup de main.* But Lannes, Serrurier, and Murat himself, seemed but little disposed to direct the bayonets against the legislature.

In the meantime the most horrible tumult reigned in the hall. Firm in the president's chair, Lucien made vain efforts to reëstablish tranquillity, earnestly entreating his colleagues to allow his brother to be recalled and heard, and obtaining no other answer than, *Outlawry! Let the outlawry of General Bonaparte be put to the vote!* They even went so far

as to call upon him to put to the vote the motion of outlawry against his brother. Lucien, indignant, quitted the chair, abdicated the presidency, and laid aside its badge. He had scarcely descended from the tribune, when some grenadiers arrived, and carried him out with them. Lucien, astonished, learnt that it was by order of his brother, who was anxious for his assistance, being determined upon employing force to dissolve the legislature.

Such was the advice of Sieyes; seated in a chaise drawn by six post-horses, he awaited the issue of the event at the gates of St. Cloud. There was no longer time for hesitation. Pale and trembling, the most zealous partisans of Bonaparte were petrified, whilst the most timid among them already declared against his enterprise. Jourdan and Augereau were observed standing aloof, watching the favorable moment for drawing the grenadiers into the popular party. But Sieyes, Bonaparte, and Talleyrand, who had come to Saint Cloud with Rœderer, were of opinion, as well as myself, that the party would want both *an arm and a head.*

Lucien, inspiring Bonaparte with all his energy, mounted a horse, and in his quality of president, required the assistance of force to dissolve the assembly. The grenadiers in close columns, with Murat at their head, followed him into the hall of the five hundred, whilst Colonel Moulins caused the charge to be beaten. The hall is invaded amidst the noise of drums and the shouts of the soldiers, the deputies escape out of the windows, throw away their togas, and disperse themselves. Such was the result of the day of Saint Cloud (19th Brumaire, 10th November). Bonaparte was particularly indebted for it to the energy of his brother Lucien, to the decision of Murat, and perhaps to the weakness of the generals, who, though opposed to him, dared not openly show their hostility.

But it became necessary to render national an anti-popular event, in which force had triumphed over a representative rabble, alike incapable of showing either a real orator or chief. It was requisite to sanction what history will call the triumph of military usurpation.

Sieyes, Talleyrand, Bonaparte, Rœderer, Lucien, and Boulay de la Meurthe, who were the soul of the enterprise, decided that the deputies of their party, who were wandering in the

apartments and galleries of St. Cloud, should be instantly assembled. Boulay and Lucien went in search of them, gathered together twenty or thirty, and constituted them the council of five hundred. From this mock assembly a decree was issued, the burden of which was, that General Bonaparte, the general officers, and the troops which seconded him, had deserved well of their country. The leaders then agreed upon asserting in the next day's newspaper, that several deputies had endeavored to assassinate Bonaparte, and that the majority of the council had been overruled by a minority of assassins.

Then came the promulgation of the act of the 19th Brumaire, likewise concerted among the leaders, to serve as a legal foundation for the new revolution. This act abolished the directory; instituted a consular executive commission, composed of Sieyes, Roger-Ducos, and Bonaparte; adjourned the two councils, and excluded from them sixty-two members of the popular party, among whom figured General Jourdan; it besides appointed a legislative commission of fifty members chosen equally from both councils, whose duty it was to prepare a new draft of the constitution of the state. Upon being brought from the assembly of the five hundred to the council of the ancients, to be transformed into a law, this act was only voted for by the minority, the majority maintaining a mournful silence. Thus the intermediary establishment of the new order of things was converted into a law by some sixty of the members of the legislature, who declared themselves to be duly qualified for the employment of ministers, diplomatic agents, and delegates of the consular commission.

Bonaparte, with his two colleagues, came into the council of the ancients to take the oaths, and on the 11th of November, about five o'clock in the morning, the new government quitting St. Cloud, came to install itself in the palace of the Luxembourg. I had foreseen, that all the authority of this executive triumvirate would fall into the hands of him who had already been invested with the military power. Of this, there was no longer any doubt after the first sitting which the three consuls held together that very night. There, Bonaparte took possession of the president's armchair, which neither Sieyes nor Roger-Ducos dared to dispute with him.

Roger, already gained over, declared, that Bonaparte alone could save the country, and that he would henceforth follow his opinion in everything. Sieyes sat silent, biting his lips. Bonaparte, knowing him to be avaricious, abandoned to him the private treasury of the directory; it contained 800,000 francs, which Sieyes immediately seized, and adopting the lion's mode of division, left only 100,000 francs to his colleague Roger-Ducos. This trifling douceur calmed his ambition a little, for he expected that Bonaparte would turn his attention to war, and would leave the civil affairs in his hands. But hearing Bonaparte, at their first sitting, treat upon the finances, the administration, the laws, the army, politics in general, and discuss these various subjects with much ability, he said, upon entering his house, in presence of Talleyrand, Boulay, Cabanis, Rœderer, and Chazal: "Gentlemen, you have a master."

It was easy to perceive that a suspicious and avaricious priest, surfeited with gold, would not dare to contend long with a general, young, active, possessed of immense renown, and who, in fact, had already made himself master of power. Besides, Sieyes possessed none of those qualities which could have insured him a great influence with a proud and warlike nation. His title alone, of priest, had made him unpopular with the army; here artifice could do nothing against force. In wishing to make a trial of it with respect to me, Sieyes failed.

In the second sitting, held by the consuls, the change of the ministry was discussed. When they came to the police, Sieyes, alleging some insidious reasons, proposed that I should be replaced by Alquier, who was his creature. Bonaparte objected that I had conducted myself very well on the 18th Brumaire, and that I had given sufficient proofs. In fact, not only I had favored the development of his incipient dispositions, but had also, at the critical moment, succeeded in paralyzing the efforts of several of the deputies and generals who might have impeded the success of the day. Scarcely had the intelligence of it reached me, than I had caused to be placarded, that very night, all over Paris, a proclamation full of attachment and obedience to the savior of the country. I was retained in an office, without doubt, the most important

of all, in spite of Sieyes, and in defiance of the intrigues which had been played off against me.

Bonaparte judged better of the state of things; he felt that he had many obstacles yet to overcome, that it was not sufficient to vanquish, but that he must subdue: that it was not too much to have at his command a minister experienced against the anarchists. He was equally convinced that his interest rendered it imperative upon him to lean for support upon a man whom he believed most capable of keeping him on his guard against a cheat who had become his colleague. The confidential report which I placed in his hands the very evening of his installation, at the Luxembourg, had convinced him that the police were as clear as they were quick-sighted.

Sieyes, in the meantime, who was anxious for proscriptions, was continually exclaiming against such as he called opposers and anarchists: he told Bonaparte, that the public opinion, empoisoned by the Jacobins, became detestable; that the police bulletins proved it, and that severe examples were necessary. "See," said he, "in what colors they have painted the glorious day of St. Cloud! To believe them, its only springs, its only lever, were artifice, falsehood, and audacity. The consular commission is nothing but a triumvirate invested with a terrific dictatorship, which corrupts the better to enslave; the act of the 19th Brumaire is the work of a few deserters, abandoned by their colleagues, and who, though deprived of a majority, are not less eager to sanction the usurpation. You should hear what they say of you, of me! We must not suffer ourselves to be thus dragged through the mire, for if once debased, we are lost. In the Faubourg St. Germain, some say that it is the military faction which has just snatched the reins of government out of the hands of the lawyers; others assert, that General Bonaparte is about to perform the part of Monk. Thus by some we are classed with the Bourbons, and by others among the most furious of Robespierre's creatures. Severity is necessary to prevent public opinion from being left to the mercy of the royalists and anarchists. These must be struck first. It is always in its *début* that a new power should show its force." Upon concluding this artful speech, Sieyes insinuated that the head

of the police should be required to put in execution a measure highly essential to the public weal, and the general security; he conquered Bonaparte's resistance. It had been declared, on the 19th Brumaire, that there should be no more oppressive acts, no more lists of proscription, and yet, on the 26th, I was required to furnish names in order to form a list of those to be proscribed. That same day, the consuls issued a decree condemning, without previous trial, fifty-five of the principal opposers to banishment; thirty-seven to French Guiana, and twenty-two to the Island of Oleron. On these lists, names, blasted and odious, were soon followed by those of amiable and esteemed citizens. What I had prognosticated to the consuls came to pass; the voice of the public, highly, and in the strongest manner, disapproved of this impolitic and useless proscription.

They were compelled to yield, but first commenced with making exceptions. I entreated and obtained the liberty of several proscribed deputies. I represented how much France and the army would be shocked at seeing people persecuted on account of their opinions—Jourdan, for example, who had gained the battle of Fleurus, and whose probity was immaculate. The proscriber Sieyes, seeing Bonaparte shaken, did not dare to prosecute the execution of an odious measure, which he had taken care to impute to me. It was withdrawn, and they contented themselves, upon my proposition, with placing the opponents under the eyes of the high police. The three consuls then felt how necessary it was for them to consult and gain public opinion: many of their acts were calculated to deserve the confidence of the people. They lost no time in revoking the law respecting hostages and the compulsory loans, which were so obnoxious.

A few days sufficed to make it certain, that the transactions of the 18th Brumaire had obtained the consent of the nation. This has now become an historical truth: it was at that time a fact which decided the struggle between the government of the many, and that of a single person.

Upon this information, a secret council was held, to which I was called; Bonaparte, Cambacérès, Lebrun, Lucien, Joseph, Berthier, Réal, Regnault, and Rœderer were present. There we discussed on a counter-project, and the conduct to be pur-

sued by Bonaparte in the general conferences which were impatiently awaited.

At length, towards the middle of December, the three consuls and the two legislative commissions assembled in Bonaparte's apartment. The conferences commenced at nine o'clock in the evening, and were prolonged far into the night. Daunou acted as secretary. Sieyes at the first sitting did not utter a word; at length, pressed on all sides, he yielded, and then gave several detached parts of his theories, contained in separate books. With the tone of an oracle, he successively explained to us the bases of his favorite constitution. It created a *Tribunat,* composed of one hundred members, who were to discuss the laws; a legislative body more numerous, whose province was to receive or reject them by vote, without any oral discussion; and lastly, a senate composed of members elected for life, and charged with the more important office of watching over the preservation of the laws and the constitution of the state.

All these ground-works, against which Bonaparte made no serious objections, were successively adopted. As to the government, he invested it with the power of applying the laws, and, for this purpose, created a council of state, charged with drawing up and improving the projects and regulations of the public administration. It was known that the government of Sieyes was to terminate in a point, in a species of monarchical pinnacle, erected upon republican foundations; an idea to which he had been for a long time attached: an attention and even impatient curiosity were manifested, till at last he uncovered the capital of his constitutional edifice. What was Sieyes' proposal?

A grand elector, chosen for life by the conservative senate, sitting at Versailles, representing the majority of the nation, with a revenue of six millions, a guard of three thousand men, and having no other office than to appoint two consuls, one for *peace,* and another for *war,* both independent of each other in the exercise of their functions. And this *grand elector,* in case of a bad choice, could be *absorbed* by the senate, which was invested with the right of calling into its own body, without explaining its reasons, every depositary of public authority, the two consuls and the grand elector

himself; the latter thus becoming a member of the senate, would no longer have any direct share in the operations of government.

Here Bonaparte could no longer contain himself; rising up and bursting into a loud laugh, he took the paper from the hands of Sieyes, and, with one dash of his pen, *sabered* what he called metaphysical nonsense. Sieyes, who generally sulked, instead of resisting, objections, defended, nevertheless, his grand elector; and said that, after all, a king ought to be nothing else. Bonaparte replied, with much warmth, that he mistook the shadow for the substance, the abuse for the principle; that there could not be in the government any active power without an independence founded upon, and defined by, prerogative. He also made several other preconcerted objections, to which Sieyes replied very lamely; and getting gradually warmer, he concluded with apostrophizing his colleague thus:—"How could you suppose, citizen Sieyes, that a man of honor, talent, and some ability in affairs, would ever consent to be nothing but a hog fatting on a few millions in the royal palace of Versailles?" Amused by this sally, the members of the conference began to laugh; and Sieyes, who had already showed indecision, remained confounded, and his *grand elector* sank forever.

It is certain that Sieyes concealed some deep projects in this ridiculous form of government, and that had it been adopted, he would have had the upper hand in its execution. It was he doubtless whom the senate was to have nominated *grand elector*, and he would have appointed Bonaparte consul for war, leaving to circumstances to decide whether he should *absorb* him. By this means, everything would have remained in his own hands, and it would have been easy for him, by causing himself to be *absorbed*, to have caused some other personage to be called to the head of the government, and to have transformed, by a transition artfully prepared, an elective executive power into an hereditary royalty, in favor of any dynasty it might have suited him to establish, in the interests of a revolution of which he was the *hierophant*.

But his circuitous and suspicious proceedings brought against him the determined resistance of the consul, which he ought to have expected; and, thence, the overthrow of

all his projects. He had not, however, neglected to secure, as will shortly be seen, a safe retreat against all the shafts of adverse fortune.

It was not sufficient to do away with the project of Sieyes; it was necessary, besides, that the adherents and intimate advisers of the General-consul should cause some mode of government to be adopted which would secure the power in their own hands. All was ready. But notwithstanding the personal retreat of Sieyes, the party who were attached to his plans, the rejection of which had disappointed them, made a new attack, and proposed the adoption of forms purely republican. To this was opposed the creation of a president, similar to that of the United States, for ten years, free in his choice of ministers, of his council of state, and all the members of the administration. Others, who had been tutored, advised to disguise the sole magistrateship of the president; for which purpose they offered to conciliate conflicting opinions, by forming a government of three consuls, of which two should only be advisers as occasion required (*conseillers nécessaires*).

But when they tried to have it decided, that there should be a first consul, invested with supreme power, having the right of nominating to, and dismissing from all appointments, and that the two other consuls should only have consulting voices, then objections arose. Chazal, Daunou, Courtois, Chénier, and many others besides, insisted upon constitutional limits; they represented, that if General Bonaparte took upon himself the supreme magistracy, without a previous election, he would show the ambition of a usurper, and justify the opinion of those who had asserted that the events of the 18th Brumaire were solely intended for his own aggrandizement.

Making a last effort to remove him, they offered him the dignity of generalissimo, with the power of making peace and war, and of treating with foreign powers. "I will remain at Paris," replied Bonaparte, with vivacity, and biting his nails; "I will remain at Paris; I am consul."

Then Chénier, breaking silence, spoke of liberty, of the republic, of the necessity of putting some restrictions upon power, insisting, with much energy and courage, upon the adoption of the measure of *absorption* into the senate. "That

shall not be!" cried Bonaparte, in a rage, and stamping with his feet, "we will rather wade to our knees in blood!" At these words, which changed into a scene a deliberation hitherto kept within the bounds of moderation, every one remained speechless; and the majority, being overcome, placed the power, not into the hands of three consuls, the second and third having only consulting voices, but into the hands of a single one, nominated for ten years, reëligible, promulgating laws, appointing and dismissing, at his will, all the members of the executive power, making peace and war, and, in fact, nominating himself. In fact, Bonaparte, in avoiding to establish the senate, as an independent institution, would not even be first consul by the act of the senators.

Whether from spite or pride, Sieyes refused to be one of the accessory consuls; this was expected, and the choice, which was already made by Bonaparte *in petto,* fell upon Cambacérès and Lebrun, who differed but very little in politics. The one, a member of the convention, having voted for the death of the king, had embraced the revolution in its principles as well as its consequences, but like a cold egotist; the other, brought up in the maxims of ministerial despotism, under the Chancellor Maupeou, whose intimate secretary he was, caring little about theories, attached himself solely to the action of power; the one, a powerless defender of the principles of the revolution and of its interests, was inclined for the return of distinctions, honors, and abuses; the other was a warmer and a juster advocate of social order, of morals, and of public faith. Both were enlightened, and men of probity, although avaricious.

A decree of the 20th November ordained that the two preceding legislative councils should assemble, of their own right, in February, 1800. In order to elude with more effect this decree, the execution of which would have compromised the consular dignity, a new constitution was submitted to the acceptance of the French people. The object was no longer to collect them in primary assemblies by consecrating again the democratic principle; but to open registers in all the government departments, and public offices—in which the citizens were to inscribe their votes. These votes amounted to three millions and more; and I can affirm that there was

no deception in the computation, so favorably received was the revolution *de Brumaire* by the great majority of Frenchmen.

Nine times, in less than seven years, since the fall of the royal authority, the nation had seen the helm pass into different hands, and the vessel of state dashed upon new shoals. But this once the pilot inspired more universal confidence. He was considered to be steady and skillful, and his government, in other respects, assumed the forms of stability.

From the day on which Bonaparte declared himself first consul, and was recognized in that character, he judged that his reign was substantially to date from that period, and he did not disguise that opinion in the internal action of his government. Republicanism was observed to lose every day some portion of its gloomy austerity, and conversions in favor of unity of power were seen to become frequent.

At that period, Bonaparte had no more cause to fear any material opposition in the interior of France, except that of some royalist bands which still retained their arms in the departments of the East, and chiefly in Morbihan. In Europe, his power was neither so well consolidated nor so undisputed. He was perfectly aware, and beforehand, that he could only strike its roots deeply by new victories. Of these he was therefore greedy.

But France was then emerging from a crisis; her finances were exhausted; if anarchy had been quelled, it was not so with royalism; and the republican spirit was fermenting secretly beyond the sphere of power. As to the French armies, notwithstanding their recent successes in Holland and Switzerland, they were not yet in a condition to take again the offensive. The whole of Italy was lost; even the Apennines no longer stopped the soldiers of Austria.

What then did Bonaparte do? By the excellent advice of his minister for foreign affairs, he sagaciously availed himself of the passions of the Emperor Paul the First, in order to detach him entirely from the coalition; he next made his appearance on the ostensible stage of European diplomacy, by publishing his famous letter to the King of England; it contained overtures offered in an unusual form. In that circumstance, the first consul saw the double advantage of

obtaining credit for his pacific intentions, and of persuading France, in the event of the refusal which he expected, that in order to obtain that peace, which was the object of all his wishes, he must have gold, steel, and men.

When one day, on coming out of his private cabinet council, he told me, with an air of inspiration, that he felt assured of re-conquering Italy in three months, at first I saw a little presumption and boasting in these words, and yet they persuaded me. Carnot, who, a short time previously, had become minister of war, perceived as well as myself, that there was one thing which Bonaparte understood above all others, and that was the practical science of war.

But when Bonaparte positively told me, that he intended, before his departure for the army, that all the departments of the West should be tranquil, and when he pointed out means to obtain this end, which coincided with my own views, I saw that he was not only a warrior, but also a shrewd politician; and I seconded his exertions with a good fortune, for which he acknowledged his obligations.

We were, however, unable to break up the royalist league, except by means of the great *primum mobile,* subornation. In this respect, the *curé* Bernier, and two viscountesses, served us most effectually in accrediting the opinion that Bonaparte was exerting himself to replace the Bourbons on the throne.

The bait took so well, that the king himself, then at Mittau, deceived by his correspondents in Paris, and thinking that the favorable moment was come for him to claim his crown, forwarded to the consul Lebrun, through the Abbé de Montesquieu, his secret agent, a letter addressed to Bonaparte, in which, in the noblest expressions, he endeavored to convince him of the honor he would acquire by replacing him on the throne of his ancestors. "I can do nothing for France without you," said that prince, "and yourself cannot contribute to the welfare of France without me. Hasten then."

At the same time, the Count d'Artois sent the Duchess de Guiche, a lady rich in the charms of her person and mind, from London, in order, on his side, to open a parallel negotiation through Josephine, who was considered as the tutelary angel of the royalists and emigrants. She obtained some interviews, and I was informed of them by Josephine

herself, who, in conformity to our conditions, cemented by a thousand francs per day (£40), instructed me in all that passed in the interior of the château.

I confess that I was mortified in not receiving from Bonaparte any instruction respecting circumstances so essential. I therefore went to work; I had recourse to extraordinary means; and I learnt, in a positive manner, the proceedings of the Abbé de Montesquieu with the consul Lebrun. I made it the subject of a memorial, which I addressed to the first consul, in which I mentioned equally the mission and the proceedings of the Duchess de Guiche. I represented to him, that, in sanctioning such negotiations, he gave occasion to suspect that he sought to secure for himself, in case of a reverse of fortune, a brilliant means both of fortune and security; but that he miscalculated greatly, if, indeed, it were possible for a mind so magnanimous as his, to stoop to so erroneous a policy; that he was, essentially, the man of the revolution, and could be no other; and that the Bourbons could by no chance reascend the throne, except by reaching it over his dead body.

This memorial, which I took care to draw up and write myself, proved to him that nothing which concerned the secrets and safety of the state could escape my notice. It produced the result which I expected; that is to say, it made a vivid impression on the mind of Bonaparte. The Duchess de Guiche was dismissed with an order to repair without delay to London; and the consul Lebrun was reprimanded for having received a letter from the king, through an underhanded channel. My credit from that time assumed the solidity which befitted the eminence and importance of my functions.

Other scenes were about to commence; but they were scenes of blood and carnage on new fields of battle. Moreau, who had passed the Rhine on the 25th April, 1800, had already defeated the Austrians in three encounters before the 10th May; when Bonaparte, between the 16th and 20th, in an enterprise worthy of Hannibal, passed the Great St. Bernard, at the head of the whole army of reserve. Surprising the enemy, which, either through negligence or delusion, persisted, on the Var and toward Genoa, in invading the frontier

of France, he directed his march upon Milan, through the valley of Aoste and Piedmont, and arrived in time to cut off the communication of the Austrian army, commanded by Melas. The Austrian, disconcerted, concentrated himself beneath the cannon of Alessandria, at the confluence of the Tanaro and the Bormida, and, after some partial defeats, courageously advanced to meet the first consul, who, on his side, was marching in the same direction.

The decisive crisis was approaching, and kept the public mind in suspense. Feelings and opinions were in a state of ferment in Paris, especially among the two extreme parties, popular and royalist. The moderate republicans were no less moved. They felt a kind of misgiving in seeing at the head of the government, a general more disposed to employ the cannon and the saber than the cap of liberty or the scales of justice. The malcontents cherished the hope, that the individual, whom they already called the Cromwell of France, would be arrested in his course, and that owing his elevation to war, he would owe to war his destruction.

Things were in this state, when, on the evening of the 20th June, two commercial expresses arrived with news from the army, announcing that on the 14th instant, at five o'clock in the evening, the battle fought near Alessandria had turned to the disadvantage of the consular army, which was retreating; but that the contest was still continued. This intelligence, diffused with the rapidity of lightning throughout all classes, equally interested, produced upon the public mind the same effect as the electric spark does upon the human body.

People are seen to seek each other, to meet together; these hasten to Chénier's, others to Courtois', those to the Staël coterie; some to Sieyes', and others to Carnot's. Every one says that the republic in peril must be saved from the Corsican's claws; that, in re-conquering it, a plan more congenial with wisdom and liberty must be adopted; that a chief magistrate is necessary, but he must not be an arrogant dictator, nor the emperor of the soldiery. Then, every look, every thought is fixed upon Carnot, the minister of the war department.

I was, at the same moment, informed of the news, and of

the public ferment which it occasioned. I hastened instantly to the two consuls, and I found them in a state of consternation; I endeavored to rouse and support them. But I confess, that on returning to my own house, my mind stood in need of all its energy. My audience room was full of company; I took care not to show myself; at length, I was besieged even in my closet. In vain I gave orders to be denied to all but my intimate friends; the heads of the file forced their way to me. I fatigued myself to death in telling everybody that the news was exaggerated; that probably it was a stock-jobbing trick; that, besides, Bonaparte had always performed miracles on the field of battle. "But wait," said I, "do not act rashly, nor imprudently; let there be no envenomed speeches, nothing ostensible, nor hostile."

The next day an express arrived from the first consul, loaded with the laurels of victory; the disenchantment of one party could not stifle the universal intoxication. The battle of Marengo, like that of Actium, made our young Triumvir triumph, and raised him to the pinnacle of power, equally fortunate, but not so discreet as the Octavius of Rome. He had left us in the character of the first magistrate of a nation, still free, and he was about to reappear in the character of a conqueror. In fact, one might have said that, at Marengo, he had less conquered Italy than France. From this period is to be dated the first step of that disgusting and servile flattery with which all the magistrates and public authorities conspired to turn his head during the fifteen years of his predominance. One of his councilors of state, named Rœderer, already made a divinity of his new master, and was seen to apply to him, in a public journal, the well-known verse of Virgil:

Deus nobis hæc otia fecit.

I foresaw all the fatal consequences that this adulatory tendency (so unworthy of a great people) would produce on France and on her chief. But the intoxication was at its height, and the triumph was complete. At length, in the night between the 2nd and 3rd of July, the conqueror arrived.

I observed, from the first moment, an appearance of moroseness and constraint on his countenance. That very eve-

ning, at the hour appointed to transact business, he darted a gloomy look at me, on entering his closet, and broke out in ejaculations:—"What? so! I was thought to be lost, and an experiment was about to be again made on a Committee of Public Safety. I know everything—and those were the men whom I saved and spared. Do they take me for Louis XVI.? Let them try, and find the difference. Let them be undeceived; a battle lost is for me a battle gained. I fear nothing; I will crush all those ungrateful men and traitors into dust.—I am able to save France in spite of the factious and anarchical."

I represented to him that there had only been a fit of the republican fever, excited by an inauspicious report, a report that I had contradicted, and the ill effects of which I had restrained; that my memorial to the two consuls, a copy of which I had transmitted to him, would enable him to appreciate, at its true value, that trifling movement of ferment and misgiving; and that, in fine, the *dénouement* was so magnificent, and the public satisfaction so general, that one might easily bear a few clouds, which only rendered the brilliancy of the picture more dazzling.—"But you do not tell me all," replied he; "was there not a design to place Carnot at the head of the government? Carnot, who suffered himself to be mystified on the 18th of Fructidor, who could not retain his authority for two months, and whom they would not fail to send to perish at Sinnamary."

I affirmed that the conduct of Carnot had been unimpeachable; and I remarked that it would be very hard to render him responsible for the extravagant projects engendered by sickly brains, and of which he, Carnot, had not the least idea.

He was silent; but the impression had struck deep. He did not forgive Carnot, who, some time after, found himself under the necessity of resigning the portfolio of war. It is probable that I should have shared his anticipated disgrace, had not Cambacérès and Lebrun been witnesses of the circumspection of my conduct and the sincerity of my zeal.

[Here follows a long self-laudatory account of the intrigues by which Fouché claims to have directed the career of Napoleon. As his narrative has been rejected by historians, it is here resumed only where it becomes more trustworthy.]

Before touching on the events of Napoleon's return from Elba, let us throw a retrospective glance. It will have been seen that I had, at first, no intention of joining the rebellious party; my only aim was to induce the cabinet of the Tuileries to seize the reins of the revolution, and hold them with a vigorous hand through the midst of surrounding obstacles. I think I may avow, without arrogating too much to myself, that I alone was capable of heading and superintending such a system; at the court, in Paris, and in the provinces, I was selected by all parties as fittest for this bold attempt. I had to contend against rivals, to whom the past appeared to furnish with invincible arms; but, up to the latest moment, I never ceased seeking for some *mezzo-termine,* some mode of conciliation, which might do away with the necessity of recurring to the desperate expedient of the emperor's return. It has been seen, how in yielding to it I yielded to the necessity of the case.

It was only at the moment of Napoleon's landing, that I was thoroughly informed of the fatal combination which brought him back to our shores. Its object embraced three distinct sub-divisions: the return of Napoleon to Paris; the captivity of the king and the royal family; and the evasion of Maria-Louisa and her son from Vienna. The first part of the plan was that, the execution of which was the easiest, considering the disposition to defection manifested by almost all the troops. The same could not be said of the seizure of the king and the royal family; for that purpose it would have been necessary for an army to have suddenly marched on the capital, an expedient which precluded the possibility of a secret; and it was on that account that the attempt of Lefebvre-Desnouettes failed. As to the evasion of Maria-Louisa and her son, that also was attempted and had nearly succeeded.

Shrinking with a kind of horror from the idea of sacrificing to a military *coup de main* the family of a monarch who had shown such a high opinion of me as to take my advice, I requested an audience of the king as soon as I learnt that Napoleon was marching upon Lyons. This interview was not granted me; but two gentlemen came, on his majesty's behalf, to receive my communications. I apprized them of the danger

which Louis XVIII. incurred, and I engaged to stop the progress of the fugitive from the Isle of Elba, if the court would consent to the terms which I required. My proposals resulted from the actual nature of the events which were in the act of being unfolded. A patriotic party, not less inimical than myself to imperial despotism, had just completed its sudden organization; it had for its chiefs MM. de Broglie, Lafayette, D'Argenson, Flaugergues, Benjamin Constant, &c. They had agreed to require of the king, the dismissal of his ministers; the nomination of forty new members selected from men of the revolution, to the chamber of peers; and that of M. de Lafayette to the command of the National Guard. It was, moreover, proposed to send, into the provinces, patriotic commissioners, in order to stop the defection of the troops and kindle a national energy in their hearts. I was no stranger to the motions of this party, by means of which I was subsequently to become minister. I was, however, aware that it was indispensable to rally all the elements of the revolution, in order to oppose them in one body to the power of the sword; that it was necessary to oppose one name against another, and the charm of those recollections, which the heir of the first mover of the revolution would excite in the hearts of freemen, against that of a glory, which, by its sudden resurrection, dazzled the genius of the camp.

When the king's ministers desired to know what were the means which I proposed to employ in order to prevent Napoleon from reaching Paris, I refused to communicate them, being disinclined to disclose them to any person but the king himself; but I protested that I was sure of success. The two chief conditions which I exacted, were the appointment of the first prince of the blood to the lieutenant-generalship of the kingdom, and the consignment of power and the direction of affairs into my hands and those of my party.

This experiment of my political measures was declined, and we therefore found ourselves necessitated, in some sort, to second the impulse of the party which I had wished to paralyze; conceiving myself, besides, in a condition to substitute a more popular government in the room of that which Napoleon threatened to revive.

The alarm in the palace of the Tuileries hourly increasing

in proportion as the march of Napoleon became more rapid and more certain, the court again turned its looks towards me. Some royalists interfered to obtain, at least, for me, an interview with *Monsieur,* the king's brother, in the apartments of the Comte d'Escars. I only required permission to go clandestinely to the Tuileries by night; the publicity of such a proceeding being otherwise calculated to compromise my influence with my party. Everything was regulated accordingly.

Monsieur did not keep me waiting long; he was only attended by the Comte d'Escars. The affability of this prince, his condescending deportment, his polite attentions, in which solicitude for the destinies of France and of his family were depicted, to sum up all, his generous and affecting language touched my heart, and doubled my regret that an interview of so vital an importance had been decided upon too late. I declared, with grief, to this frank and loyal prince, that it was too late, and that it was now impossible to serve the king's cause. It was at the conclusion of an interview which will never be erased from my mind, that subjugated by the charm of so august a confidence, and finding in the painful conviction of my own powerlessness a sudden inspiration, I exclaimed as I took leave of the prince, "Take measures to save the king, and I take upon me to save the monarchy."

Who could have imagined, that, after communications of so great an importance, there should almost immediately be set on foot against me, and against my liberty, a kind of plot, for plot it was, and a plot totally at variance with the genuine sentiments of the magnanimous sovereign and his noble brother. Its authors I will reveal. But, however it may be, I was without the least suspicion, in my own house, when some agents of the Parisian police, at the head of which Bourienne had just been placed, suddenly made their appearance, accompanied by *gendarmes* to arrest me. Having timely intelligence, I hastily took measures for my escape. The agents of police were already proceeding to an active search in my apartments, when the *gendarmes* commissioned to execute the order of the new prefect presented themselves before me. These men, who had so long obeyed my orders, not daring to lay their hands on my person, contented them-

selves with presenting me the written warrant. I took the paper, opened it, and pretending to read it, said, "This order is not regular; stay a moment while I write my protest against it." I entered my closet, seated myself at my desk, and began to write. I then rose with a paper in my hand, and making a sudden turn, I precipitately descended into my garden by a secret door; there I found a ladder resting against a wall contiguous to the mansion of Queen Hortense. I lightly climbed it; one of my people raised the ladder, which I took and let fall on its feet on the other side of the wall; this I quickly scaled, and descended with still more promptitude. I arrived, in the character of a fugitive, at the house of Hortense, who received me with open arms; and, as in a wonderful Arabian tale, I suddenly found myself in the midst of the *élite* of the Bonapartists, in the headquarters of the party, where I found mirth, and where my presence caused intoxication.

This *impromptu* circumstance completed the dissipation of that mistrust which the party entertained towards me; and the same individuals who, till then, had considered me in the light of an almost acquired partisan to the Bourbons, now beheld in me nothing more than an enemy proscribed by the Bourbons.

Let it be here understood that political considerations had nothing to do with the attempt to arrest me. His royal highness *Monsieur* went so far as to say to some influential members of the lower house, that it was against his knowledge that the attempt had been made to arrest me, and that he would answer for the safety of my person.

This attempt was nothing but the result of an interested contrivance between Savary, Bourienne, and B——; whatever might be the issue of the 20th of March, this triumvirate, or rather the three members of this triplet, had determined to secure to themselves the profits arising from the gambling houses, and they were convinced that it was necessary to sacrifice me, in order that their ambitious cupidity might acquire a kind of guarantee and consistence.

If I had once fallen into their hands, what would they have done with me? It has been said, that their object was to transfer me to Lille; but no! it was not Lille; this I

have learnt since; but it was to the castle of Saumur; and there, I repeat my question, what was the lot they intended for me? If I may rely on discoveries that my return to power elicited, one of my enemies (for all the three were not capable of crime) would have caused my assassination, and subsequently imputed my death to the royalists, who would have borne the odium.

Such was my singular position, that the departure of Louis XVIII. and the arrival of Napoleon were requisite to restore me entirely to liberty. Being one of the first to obtain intelligence that the Tuileries were vacant, I learnt, at the same time, that Lavalette had sent an express to Fontainebleau, where Napoleon had just arrived, to apprize him of the king's departure. Madame Ham——, who had intrigued so much in producing this innovation, was mortified that others should get the start of her, and, dispatching an express with orders to overtake the preceding one, obtained by that means the honor of conveying the first intelligence.

Carried onward by his own soldiers and a portion of the populace, Napoleon resumed possession of the Tuileries in the midst of his partisans, who exhibited symptoms of the most clamorous joy. I was not present at first among the other dignitaries of the state, with whom he conversed on the present aspect of affairs. But Napoleon sent for me: "So they wanted to carry you off," he said, as I approached him, "in order to prevent you from being useful to your country? Well! I now offer you an opportunity of doing her fresh service; the period is difficult, but your courage, as well as mine, is superior to the crisis. Accept once more the office of minister of police." I represented to him that the office of foreign affairs was more the object of my ambition than any other, persuaded as I was that I could, in that quarter, more than elsewhere, do my country effectual service.

"No," rejoined he, "take the charge of the police; you have learnt to judge soundly of the state of the public mind; to divine, prepare, and direct the progress of events; you understand the tactics, the resources, and the pretensions of the various parties; the police is your forte." There was no way of receding. I gave him to understand, in all its extent, the dangerous posture of affairs; and, as if he wished to

engage me more deeply in his interest, he assured me that Austria and England, in order to balance the preponderance of Russia, secretly favored his escape and return to France. Without giving credit to this assurance, I accepted the office.

The next day I learnt, through Regnault, who was devoted to me, that Bonaparte, always suspicious and mistrustful with regard to me, would have wished to keep me out of the circle of government; but that he had yielded to the solicitations of Bassano, Caulaincourt, and of Regnault himself, and his chief partisans, who in disclosing their engagements with me, impressed upon his mind the importance of strengthening himself by my popularity and the adherence of the party which I directed.

Cambacérès, who foresaw the fatal issue of this new interlude, did not accept, till after much hesitation, the office of minister of justice; the *porte-feuille* of war was given to Davoust, who was much more attached to his fortune than to Napoleon.

Caulaincourt, in the conviction that no intercourse could be established with foreign powers, at first refused the office for foreign affairs. Napoleon offered it to Molé, who declined having anything to do with it, and refused the home department at the same time. Too much devoted to the emperor to leave him without a minister, Caulaincourt at length acceded. From hand to hand, the home department at length passed into the possession of Carnot, a nomination which was considered as a national guarantee. The navy was given again to the cynical and brutal Decrès; and the secretaryship of state to Bassano, notorious for the reputation of thinking with Napoleon's thoughts, and seeing with his eyes. Out of deference to public opinion, Savary was omitted; however, Moncey having refused the *gendarmerie,* it was given to him; at least, he was so far in his proper place.

Champagny and Montalivet, who had appeared invested with the highest employments when Napoleon, almost master of the world, did not stand in so vacillating a position, modestly contented themselves, the one with the superintendence of public buildings, and the other with that of the civil list. Bertrand, equally amiable, insinuating, and zealous, superseded Duroc in the function of grand marshal of the palace.

Napoleon restored to their duty about his person almost all the chamberlains, grooms, and masters of the ceremonies, who surrounded him before his abdication; but ill-cured of his old unfortunate passion for noblemen of the *ancien régime,* he must have them at any price; he would have thought himself in the midst of a republic if he had not contrived to be environed by the ancient *noblesse.*

Yet, nevertheless, those who had assisted him in crossing the Mediterranean, pretended that he had thought as much of reëstablishing the republic or the consulate as the empire. But I knew what to believe on that head; I knew also what trouble I had had among the adherents, in getting them to force him to abandon his oppressive system, and to engage him to give pledges to the liberties of the nation. His decrees from Lyons had not been voluntary; he had there pledged himself to give a national constitution to France. "I return," he then said, "in order to protect and defend the interests which our revolution has engendered. It is my wish to give you an inviolable constitution, which shall be the joint work of the people and myself."

By his decrees from Lyons, he had abolished the chamber of peers by a single stroke of his pen, and annihilated the feudal nobility. It was also from Lyons that, in the hope of averting the resentment of foreign powers, he had commissioned his brother Joseph, then in Switzerland, to make known to them, through the intervention of their ministers to the Helvetic confederation, that he was positively determined on no longer troubling the repose of Europe, and on faithfully maintaining the treaty of Paris.

This compulsory disposition, on his part, the mistrust which he met with in the interior of France, as to the sincerity of his secret thoughts, and, I may add, my own repulsive attitude, put a stop to the impulse of a man who was ready to rekindle the flames of war throughout Europe. In fact, on the very night of his arrival at the Tuileries, he commenced a deliberation as to the expediency of renewing the scourge of war by an invasion of Belgium. But a feeling of dislike having exhibited itself among those who surrounded him, he found it necessary to abandon this project; he succumbed beneath the hand of necessity, although once more armed with

his military power. That power, however, since the Lyons decrees, had changed its nature.

By a decree of the 24th of March, suppressing the censorship and the regulation of publications, he consummated what it was agreed to call the imperial restoration. The liberty of the press, so tumultuous in France, and which is, nevertheless, the mother of all other immunities, had been reconquered. I had much contributed to it, even in the presence of its greatest enemy. Napoleon objected to me that the royalists, on one side, would employ it to aid the cause of the Bourbons—and the jacobins, on the other, to render his sentiments and projects suspected. "Sire," I rejoined, "the French require victory, or the nourishment of liberty." I insisted, also, that his decrees should contain no other epithets than that of emperor of the French, inducing him to suppress the *et cætera*, remarked with uneasiness in his proclamations and decrees from Lyons.

But the idea of being indebted to the patriots for his re-installation at the Tuileries was repugnant to him. "Some intriguers," said he to me with bitterness, "wanted to take all the credit to themselves, and turn it to their own advantage. They now lay claim to having prepared my progress to Paris; but I know what to think about it—the people, the soldiers, and the sub-lieutenants, have effected everything; it is to them and them only that I owe the whole." I felt what was meant by these words, and that they were intended as a reproof for my party and myself.

It must be obvious that, with such feelings, it was indispensable for him to make himself certain of a police different from mine. He sent for Réal, whom he had just invested with the office of prefect of police; and after having allured him with fine promises and more substantial gifts, sent him to Savary, in order to devise means of tracing and counteracting my designs—but I was on my guard.

In the meanwhile, he learnt with anxiety that Louis XVIII. proposed remaining in observation, on the frontiers of Belgium. He had, besides, another cause of vexation; Ney, Lecourbe, and other generals, wished him to purchase their services, and even to make him pay his ransom; he grew indignant at this.

The result of the royalist enterprise rather contributed to tranquillize him. He was astonished by the courage which the Duke d'Angoulême exhibited in La Drome, and especially Madame at Bordeaux. He admired the intrepidity of this heroic princess, whom the desertion of an entire army had not been able to dispirit. I must here do justice to Maret. On being informed that Grouchy had just made the Duke d'Angoulême prisoner, in contempt of the capitulation of Palud, to which the ratification of Napoleon was alone wanting, and which was in fact obtained, but not sent off, Maret concealed the arrest of the prince from Napoleon, transmitted his original orders, and only apprized him of the nullification of the convention, when the obscurity of night rendered all telegraphic communication impossible.

The next day, it was proposed in council to obtain the crown diamonds, which were worth forty millions, in exchange for the Duke d'Angoulême. I recommended the emperor to throw M. de Vitrolles into the bargain, if the restitution could be obtained. "No," said Napoleon, angrily: "he is an intriguer and an agent of Talleyrand; it was he who was dispatched to the Emperor Alexander, and who opened the gates of Paris to the allies. This man has been arrested at Toulouse, in the act of conspiring against me; if he had been shot, Lamarque would have done no more than his duty." I, however, represented to him, that if military executions had been resorted to on both sides, France would soon have been covered with blood; that political reasons prescribed a more temporizing system; and that in restoring the Duke d'Angoulême to liberty, some stipulation could be made for M. D. Vitrolles, who was only the avowed agent of the Bourbons. To this he at length acceded, and I instantly set on foot a negotiation on the subject.

We had many other causes of inquietude. Caulaincourt had just had an interview, at the house of Madame de Souza, with Baron de Vincent, the Austrian minister, whose passport was designedly delayed. The minister did not disguise that it was the resolution of the allied powers to oppose Napoleon's retention of the throne; but he suffered it to be perceived that Napoleon's son did not inspire the same repugnance. It has been seen that it was upon this same basis that I had

previously modeled the plan of an edifice, which I now considered myself in better condition to erect.

Napoleon caused the Emperor Alexander and Prince Metternich to be written to by Hortense, and also to the latter by his sister, the Queen of Naples, hoping in this way to deaden the force of the blows which he was not yet prepared to ward off. He at the same time commissioned Eugene, and the Princess Stephanie of Baden, to neglect nothing, in order to detach them from the coalition. Meanwhile, he caused overtures to be made to the cabinet of London by an agent whom I pointed out to him. And, finally, he hoped to ingratiate himself with the English parliament and nation, by a decree abolishing the negro slave trade.

Meanwhile, all our external communications were intercepted by order of the various cabinets. The proceedings of the congress of Vienna were for the Tuileries a subject of expectation and the most painful anxiety. We at length heard, in an unquestionable manner, what the public already knew, the declaration of the congress of Vienna, dated the 13th of March, which pronounced the outlawry of Napoleon. France was from that time alarmed at the evils which were preparing for her; she groaned at the thoughts of being exposed to the horrors of a new invasion, for the sake of a single man.

Napoleon affected not to be moved; and told us in full counsel, "This time, they will find that they have not to deal with the France of 1814; and their success, if they obtain it, will only serve to render the war more sanguinary and obstinate; while, on the other hand, if victory favor me, I may become as formidable as ever. Have I not on my side Belgium, and the provinces on this side of the Rhine. With the aid of a proclamation and a tricolored flag, I will revolutionize them in twenty-four hours."

I was far from allowing myself to be lulled into security by such gasconades as these. The moment I obtained knowledge of the declaration, I did not hesitate to request the king, by means of an agent, on whom I could rely, to permit me to devote myself, when opportunity occurred, to his service. I demanded no other condition in return, but the right of preserving my repose and fortune in my seclusion of Pont

Carré. Everything was acceded to, and sanctioned by Lord Wellington, who arrived just then at Ghent from the congress at Vienna; the same kind of convention had already been concluded, as far as I was concerned, between Prince Metternich, Prince de Talleyrand, and the generalissimo of the allies.

It will not be irrelevant to explain, in this place, the cause of that kindness which I met with from the Wellesley family, not only on the part of the Marquis, but also on that of Lord Wellington. It had its origin in the zeal which I manifested at the period of my second ministry, in putting an end to the captivity of a member of that illustrious family, who was detained in France in consequence of the rigorous measures enforced by Napoleon's orders.

The treaty of the 25th of March, by which the great powers engaged again not to lay down their arms while Napoleon was on the throne, was only the natural consequence of the decision of the 13th. All indirect overtures had completely failed. "No peace, no truce, with that man," replied the Emperor Alexander, to Queen Hortense; "anything but him." Flahaut, who was sent to Vienna, was not allowed to pass Stutgard; and Talleyrand refused to enter the service of Napoleon. Notwithstanding, however, the manner in which his first overtures had failed, he decided on making new applications to the Emperor of Austria. At the same time that he sent the Baron de Stassart to him, he dispatched to M. de Talleyrand, MM. de S. L. and de Monteron, well known by their connection with that statesman, and the last being his most intimate and devoted friend. But these attempts of the second order could scarcely produce any effect upon the general course of things.

Meanwhile, England and Austria were on the point of successively adopting an opén system of politics, the object of which was to isolate more and more the position of Napoleon. In her *memorandum* of the 25th of April, England declared, "that, by the treaty of the 9th of March, she had not engaged to replace Louis XVIII. on the throne, and that her intention was not to prosecute the war with a view of imposing any government whatever upon France." A similar declaration, on the part of Austria, appeared on the 9th of May following.

In the interim, I was very near finding myself compromised, in a serious manner, with respect to Austria. A secret agent of Prince Metternich having been dispatched to me, that individual, in consequence of some imprudence, was suspected, and the emperor ordered Réal to have him arrested. Terror was of course employed to extort confession from him. He declared that he had delivered a letter to me from the prince, and a sign of mutual recognition, which was to be employed by the agent whom I was about to dispatch to Bâle, in order to confer with M. Werner, his confidential delegate.

The emperor instantly sent for me, as if he wished to transact business with me. His first thought had been to have my papers seized, but that he quickly abandoned, in the persuasion that I was not a man to leave traces of what might compromise me. Not having the slightest intimation that Prince Metternich's envoy had been arrested, I neither exhibited embarrassment nor anxiety. The emperor, inferring from my silence on the subject of this secret correspondence, that I was betraying him, convoked his partisans, told them I was a traitor, that he had proofs of it, and that he would have me shot. A thousand exclamations were immediately raised against it; it was suggested to him that proofs clearer than daylight were indispensable, in order to warrant an act, which would produce the most violent sensation in the public mind. Carnot, seeing that he persevered, told him, "It is in your power to have Fouché shot, but, to-morrow at the same hour your power will have ceased."—"How?" cried the emperor.—"Yes, Sire," returned Carnot; "this is not the time for dissembling: the men of the revolution will only suffer you to reign as long as they have security that you will respect their liberties. If you cause Fouché to be put to death, by martial law, Fouché, whom they consider as their strongest guarantee, you may be assured of it, that to-morrow you will no longer possess any influence over public opinion. If Fouché be really guilty, you must obtain convincing proofs of it, denounce him subsequently to the nation, and put him on his trial according to form."

This advice was approved by every one; it was decided that steps should be taken to detect the intrigue, and that an agent should be sent to Bâle, in order to obtain the necessary proofs

for my conviction. The emperor confided this mission to his secretary Fleury. Supplied with all the necessary signs of recognition, he immediately departed for Bâle, and subsequently opened communications with M. Werner, as if he had been sent by myself.

It may be easily guessed, that the first question he put to him, was about the means on which the allies calculated for the destruction of Napoleon. M. Werner said, that nothing certain was decided on the subject; that the allies would have wished to have recourse to force only at the last extremity: that they had hoped that I might be able to find some means of delivering France from Bonaparte, without new effusion of blood. Fleury, continuing to act his part, said, "There only remain, then, two methods to pursue; to dethrone him, or assassinate him."—"To assassinate him!" exclaimed M. Werner, with indignation; "never did such an idea present itself to the mind of M. de Metternich and the allies." Fleury, notwithstanding all his artifices and his captious queries, could obtain no other proof against me, except the conviction which M. de Metternich felt, that I hated the emperor, and that this conviction had prompted him to open communications with me.

I had taken so little pains to disguise my opinion in that respect from Prince Metternich, that the preceding year (1814), at a similar epoch, on seeing him at Paris, I reproached him warmly with not having caused Bonaparte to be confined in a fortress, predicting that he would return from Elba to renew his ravages in Europe. Fleury and M. Werner separated, one to return to Vienna, and the other to Paris, in order to provide themselves with fresh instructions, and with a promise of meeting at Bâle again in eight days.

But Fleury had scarcely begun his journey to Bâle, when another direct emissary gave me reason to suspect, and enabled me to discover, what was passing: I put the letter of Prince Metternich in my *porte-feuille;* and after having transacted business with the emperor, feigning a sudden recollection: "Ah, Sire," I said to him, with the tone of a man awaking from a long forgetfulness, "how overwhelmed I must be with the state of public affairs. I am positively besieged in my cabinet; and so it is that, for several days, I have forgotten

to lay a letter of Prince Metternich under your eye. It is for your majesty to decide, whether I shall send him the agent which he requires. What can be his object? I can scarcely doubt that the allies, in order to avert the calamities of a general war, wish to induce you to abdicate in favor of your son. I am satisfied, that such is the especial desire of M. de Metternich: indeed, I must reiterate that such is mine: I have never concealed it from you; and I am still persuaded that it will be impossible for you to resist the arms of united Europe." I instantly perceived by the play of his physiognomy, that he was suffering an internal struggle between the vexation which my candor occasioned him, and the satisfaction he derived from the explanation of my conduct.

When Fleury returned, the emperor sent him to me to make a confession of the whole proceeding, as if his intention had been to gain my confidence. It was no great difficulty for me to play upon this young man, so full of enthusiasm and activity, who most seriously employed all his poor cunning to conceal from me the second appointment he had made at Bâle. I suffered him to depart; he arrived there post-haste, and had the fatigues of his journey and the heat of his vehement zeal for his pains.

Meanwhile, Monteron and Bresson, who came from Vienna, commissioned to bring me confidential communications on behalf of M. de Metternich and M. de Talleyrand, renewed the feeling of distrust which Napoleon entertained towards me. He sent for them both: questioned them for a considerable time; and could extract nothing positive from either. Urged by his uneasy feelings, he wanted to place them under *surveillance;* but he learnt, with much vexation, that Bresson had suddenly departed for England, apparently commissioned by Davoust, to purchase forty thousand muskets proposed to him by a shipowner. He did not fail to suspect a secret intelligence between Davoust and me, and that Bresson was our tool.

Well assured, moreover, that all the allied powers, unanimous in their resolution, were preparing to march against us, or, rather, against him, I proceeded early the next day to the Tuileries; and a second time I represented to Napoleon, in still stronger colors, that it was an absolute impossibility for France, in her divided condition, to sustain the assault of

universal and united Europe; that it was incumbent upon him to explain himself without disguise to the nation; to assure himself of the ultimate intentions of the allied sovereigns, and that if they persisted, as everything gave reason to infer, there would then be no room for hesitation; that his interests, and those of his country, imposed upon him the obligation of withdrawing to the United States.

But, from the reply which he stammered, in which he mingled plans of campaigns, punishments, battles, insurrections, colossal projects, decrees of destiny, I perceived that he was resolved to trust the fate of France to the issue of war, and that the military faction carried the day in spite of my admonitions.

The assembly of the Champ-de-Mai was nothing but a vain pageantry, in which Napoleon, in the garb of a citizen, hoped to mislead the populace by the charm of a public ceremony. The different parties were not more satisfied with it, than they had been with the *acte additionnel;* one faction wished that he had reëstablished a republic; and the other that in divesting himself of the crown, he had left the sovereign people in possession of the right of offering it to the most worthy; and, finally, the coalition of statesmen, of whom I constituted the soul, reproached him with not having availed himself of that solemnity to proclaim Napoleon II.—an event which would have given us a *point d'appui* in certain cabinets, and, probably, would have preserved us from a second invasion. It will not be denied that, in the critical position of France, the last expedient would have been most reasonable.

As soon as we had acquired the conviction that all attempts to produce this result in the interior of France would be unsuccessful, without proceeding to the extremity of a deposition, which the military party would not have suffered, it was necessary to make up our minds to the expectation of seeing all the gates of war thrown open. My impatience then augmented, and I labored to accelerate the march of events. It was in vain that Davoust, in council, had reiterated to Napoleon that his presence with the army was indispensable; relying too little on the capital to leave it behind him for any length of time without mistrust, he did not resolve on his departure till everything was ready to strike an effectual

blow on the frontiers of Belgium, in the hope of making his début by a triumph, and of re-conquering popularity by victory. He departed; he departed, I say, leaving the care of his *federés* to Réal; large sums of money to get them to cry "Napoleon, or Death;" and authority as to the publication of his military bulletins, with a plan of the campaign arranged for the offensive, and the secret of which was communicated to me by Davoust.

In so decisive a moment, my position became very delicate, as well as very difficult; I wished to have nothing further to do with Napoleon; yet, if he should be victorious, I should be compelled to submit to his yoke, as well as the whole of France, whose calamities he would prolong. On the other hand, I had engagements with Louis XVIII.; not that I was inclined to his restoration; but prudence required that I should procure for myself beforehand something in the shape of a guarantee. My agents, moreover, to M. de Metternich and Lord Wellington had promised mountains and marvels. The generalissimo, at least, expected that I should divulge to him the plan of the campaign.

In the first impulse—but the voice of my country, the glory of the French army which now appeared to me in any other light than that of the nation, in short, the dictates of honor, startled me at the thought, that the word traitor might ever become an appendage to the name of the Duke d'Otranto; and my resolution remained unsullied. Meantime, in such a conjuncture, what resolution was to be taken by a statesman, who ought never to be left without resources? This is the resolution I took. I knew positively that the unexpected onset of Napoleon's force would occur on the 16th or 18th, at latest; Napoleon, indeed, had determined to give battle, on the 17th, to the English army, then separated from the Prussians, after having previously routed the latter. He was so much more justified in expecting that his plan would be successful, that Wellington, deceived by false reports, thought it possible to delay the opening of the campaign till the 1st of July. The success of Napoleon rested, therefore, on the success of a surprise; I took my measures accordingly. On the very day of Napoleon's departure, I provided Madame D—— with notes, written in cipher, dis-

closing the plan of the campaign, and sent her off. At the same time I occasioned impediments on the part of the frontier which she was to pass, in such a manner as to prevent her reaching the headquarters of Wellington till after the result. This is a true explanation of the inconceivable supineness of the generalissimo, which occasioned so universal an astonishment, and conjectures of so opposite a description.

If, therefore, Napoleon fell it was owing to his own destiny; treason had nothing to do with his defeat. He, himself, did all that could be done in order to conquer; but his fall was divested of dignity. If I am asked what I think he ought to have done, I will reply, as old Horace did—*Qu'il mourût!*

It was on condition of his coming out of the contest as a victor, that the patriots had consented to give him their support; he was vanquished, and they considered the compact at an end. I learnt, at the same moment, the circumstance of his nocturnal arrival at l'Elysée, and that at Laon, after his defeat, Maret, at his instigation, had broached the advice of his quitting the army, and proceeding, without loss of time, to Paris, in order to avert a sudden reaction. I was also informed in the morning, that Lucien, keeping up his courage, endeavored to derive resources from a desperate resolution; that he urged him to seize the dictatorship—to surround himself with nothing but military elements—and to dissolve the chamber.

It was then that I was impressed with the necessity of setting in motion all the resources of my position and my experience. The defeat of the emperor, his presence at Paris, which occasioned a universal indignation, provided me with a favorable opportunity of extorting from him an abdication, which he had declined when it might have saved him. I set in motion all my friends, all my adherents, and all my agents, whom I provided with the watchword. For myself, I communicated, before attending the council, with the principal members of all the parties.

To the unquiet, suspicious, and fearful members of the chamber, I said, "It is now necessary to act; we must say little, and resort to force; he is returned raving; he is determined upon dissolving the chamber and seizing the dictatorship. I trust we shall not suffer such a return to tyranny

as this." I said to the partisans of Napoleon, "Are you not aware that the ferment against the emperor has reached the highest pitch, among the majority of the deputies? His fall is desired; his abdication is demanded. If you are bent on serving him, you have but one certain path to follow, and that is to make head vigorously against them, to show them what power you still retain, and to affirm that one single word would be sufficient to dissolve the chamber." I also entered into their language and views; they then disclosed their secret inclinations, and I was enabled to say to the heads of the patriots, who rallied round me: "You perceive that his best friends make no mystery of it; the danger is pressing; in a few hours the chambers will exist no longer; and you will have much to answer for, in neglecting to seize the only moment when you could prevent a dissolution."

The council being assembled, Napoleon caused Maret to read the bulletin of the battle of Waterloo; and concluded by declaring, that in order to save the country, it was indispensable that he should be invested with larger powers; in short, with a temporary dictatorship. That he might seize it, but that he thought it more useful and more national to wait for its being conferred on him by the chambers. I left to such of my colleagues who thought and acted with me, the task of contending against this proposition, which had already fallen into disrepute and ruin.

It was then that M. de Lafayette, apprised of what was passing in the council, and sure of the majority, brought his motion for the permanency of the chambers, a motion which disconcerted the whole military party, and, rallying the patriotic party, conferred upon it a considerable moral force.

Kept in check by the chambers, Napoleon did not dare to take any step; he sounded Davoust as to the feasibility of effecting its dissolution by military means; but Davoust declined.

The next day, we all maneuvered to extort his abdication. There was a multitude of messages backwards and forwards, parleys, objections, replies—in a word, evolutions of every description; ground was taken, abandoned, and again retaken. At length, after a warm battle, Napoleon surrendered, in full council, under the conviction that longer resist-

ance was useless; then turning to me, he said, with a sardonic smile, "Write to those gentlemen to make themselves easy; they shall be satisfied." Lucien took up the pen, and drew, under Napoleon's dictation, the act of abdication, such as it was afterwards made public.

Here then was a change of scene; the power having passed away from the hands of Napoleon, who was to remain master of the field? I soon detected the secret designs of the cabinet; I discovered that the Bonapartist party, now under the guidance of Lucien, intended, as a consequence of the abdication, to countenance the immediate proclamation of Napoleon II., and the establishment of a council of regency. This would have been to have suffered the hostile camp to triumph. In fact, that regency which had been for so long a time the drift of all my calculations, and the object of all my desires, being now about to be organized under another influence than mine, excluded me from a share in the government.

It was necessary, therefore, to recur to new combinations, and to man counter-batteries, in order, with equal address, to defeat the system of the regency and the restoration of the Bourbons. I therefore conceived the creation of a provisional government, established in conformity with my own suggestions, and which, in consequence, I should be able to direct according to my own views. I presented myself to the chamber with a view of inducing it to act with decision in consecrating the principles and the laws of the revolution.

The chamber having accepted the abdication of Napoleon without noticing the condition it contained, Lucien exerted himself to procure the proclamation of Napoleon II. He had in his favor the *federés,* the soldiers, the populace, and a large part of the chamber of peers. I had on my side the majority of the lower chamber, a party also in the chamber of peers, the national guard, the greater part of the generals, and the royalists, who courted and surrounded me in the hope that I should direct the throw of the die in favor of the Bourbons.

Lucien had already sent Réal to the Elysée in order to assemble the *federés* under the windows of Napoleon. It was with great difficulty that the assent of the ex-emperor was obtained; it was only procured by remarking that my

party intended to consider his abdication as a single and unqualified act; that if he did not at least preserve some shadow of his power, neither his security by flight, nor the conveyance of his wealth could be answered for; that, moreover, the abdication in favor of his son might probably induce Austria to obtain more favorable conditions from the rest of the allies in his behalf.

Réal immediately entered the field, and raked together all the *canaille* of Paris in the *Champs Elysées;* while Lucien, on his side, entered his carriage, and hurried to the chamber of peers, where he exclaimed, in an harangue got up for the occasion: *"The emperor is dead; long live the emperor; let us proclaim Napoleon II.!"* The majority appeared to accede to this proposal. Lucien returned in triumph to the *Champs Elysées,* instructed the two or three thousand *brigands* whom Réal had assembled round the palace in their part, and got them to promise to proceed to the chamber of representatives, in order to determine the proclamation of Napoleon II. He *reëntered the Elysée,* and returned upon the terrace with his brother, whose countenance betrayed evident marks of depression. There Napoleon saluted the bands of fanatics, waving his hand, as they defiled before him with acclamations of *"Long live our emperor and his son; we will have no other!"*

But these demonstrations of their zeal gave me little uneasiness. I had my eye upon the most inconsiderable movements, and the only staunch political string was in my hands. I had, moreover, secured to myself an initiative influence; and at the very moment of this ridiculous hubbub, the chamber were naming an executive provisional committee, the presidentship of which devolved upon me.

Meanwhile Réal had given the pass-word to the *federés,* ordering them to march in procession before the palace of the legislative body; they flocked thither in crowds; but it was too late; the terrified legislators had just abandoned the hall, after having appointed a committee. Night dispersed the mob, which, in passing through the streets of Paris, affrighted the citizens with the discharge of their muskets, and set up loud cries of "Death to all who refuse to recognize Napoleon II.!"

The agitation of the day was terminated by nocturnal meetings, the preludes of one of the most animated of public sittings which was to occur on the following day. Next morning, I and my colleagues, Caulaincourt, Carnot, Quinette, and General Grenier, entered on our new possession of the reins of government. We were proceeding in the task of our organization, when I learnt that the deputy Bérenger, at the opening of the sitting, had just demanded that the members of the committee should be held collectively responsible. The obvious drift of this proposal was to engage each of them to separate themselves from my vote, and to watch my proceedings, which was a consequence of the suspicions which I occasioned among the Bonapartist faction. As if he had not said enough, Bérenger added, "If these men be inviolable, you will, in case any one of them should betray his duty, possess no means of punishing him."

I cared very little for these underhanded attacks; as I have before said, my party was the strongest.

The councilor of state, Boulay de la Meurthe, one of the most zealous partisans of Bonaparte, went so far as to deliver a philippic, in which he pointed out and denounced the Orleans faction; this was apprising the friends of the Bourbons and the Bonapartists, that a third party was making its appearance in favor of the doctrine of *de facto* government, which for three months we had been opposing to the doctrine of legitimacy.

It is certain, that, finding myself embarked with a new party, more accordant with my principles than those which offered no other prospect than an absolute government or counter-revolution; and, feeling the impossibility of preserving the throne of Napoleon II., I felt more inclined to second the efforts of this new party, provided the cabinets should not exhibit too hostile a feeling towards it. The declamation of Boulay had for its principal object to cause the proclamation of Napoleon II. by the chamber. The party was strong, and it required some address to avert its attack.

M. Manuel undertook this very delicate task in a discourse which obtained universal applause, and in which it was fancied that the stamp of my policy was discernible.

He concluded by opposing himself to the design of investing any member of the Bonaparte family with the regency; that was the decisive point, and that was abandoning the field of battle to me. The assent of the chamber was a new guarantee to the committee of government, and conferred upon me, in my character of president, an incontestable preponderance in public affairs.

Our first operation, after being installed on the 23rd of June, was to cause the war to be declared national, and to send five plenipotentiaries to the headquarters of the allies, with powers to negotiate peace, and to signify assent to any species of government but that of the Bourbons. Their secret instructions went to the effect of conferring the crown, in default of Napoleon II., on the King of Saxony, or the Duke of Orleans, whose party had been reinforced by a great number of deputies and generals.

I confess that I, in this measure, made rather a large concession to the actual leaders, and that I secretly entertained strong doubts as to their attainment of the object they proposed. I had also so much the more reason to believe that the cause of the Bourbons was far from desperate, as one of my secret agents shortly arrived to inform me of Louis XVIII.'s entry into Cambray, and to bring me his royal declaration. Our plenipotentiaries, therefore, were at first amused with dilatory answers.

My position may be conceived. The party of Napoleon, always in activity, was recruited, if I may use the term, by eighty thousand soldiers, who arrived to make a stand under the walls of Paris; while the allied armies rapidly advanced on the capital, driving before them all the battalions and divisions which attempted to obstruct their passage. It was incumbent upon me, at one and the same time, to secure the generals, in order to control the army; to counteract the new plans of Bonaparte, which tended to nothing short of replacing him at the head of the troops; and to repress the impatience of the royalists, whose wish it was to open the gates of Paris to Louis XVIII.—and all this in the midst of the unloosing of so many contending passions, whence terrible convulsions were likely to be engendered.

I will not occupy the reader with narrating, in this place,

a multitude of minor intrigues, of accessory details, of disappointments and disputes, which, during the tornado, inflicted upon me all the tribulations of power. Previous to the abdication, I was spied upon, and continually kept on the *qui vive* by the zealous partisans of Napoleon, such as Maret, Thibaudeau, Boulay de la Meurthe, and even Regnault, who was sometimes in my favor, and sometimes opposed to me; now, I had to guard myself against the pretensions of another party; I had to fortify myself against the mistrust of my own colleagues, of Carnot among the rest, who, from having been a republican, had become so attached to the emperor, that he had bewailed him with a flood of tears in my presence, after having stood alone, and that abortively, against the measure of his abdication.

It may be easily conceived, that I did not succeed in muzzling this mob of high functionaries, marshals and generals, by any other means than pledging my head, if I may so express myself, for the safety of their persons and fortunes. It was in this manner that I obtained *carte blanche* to negotiate.

I began with sending to Wellington's headquarters my friend M. G——, a man of probity, and on whom I placed entire reliance. He was the bearer of two letters, sewed in the collar of his coat, one for the king, and the other for the Duke of Orleans; for up to the latest moment, and while involved in protracted uncertainty as to the intention of the allies, no means could justifiably be neglected for returning into safe harbor. My emissary was immediately introduced before Lord Wellington, and told him that he wished to see the Duke of Orleans. "He is not here," the generalissimo replied; "but you can address yourself to your king." And, in fact, he took the road to Cambray, and presented himself before his majesty. Finding that he did not return, I dispatched General de T—— on the same errand; a man of courage and intelligence, whom I expressly commissioned to sound the intention of Lord Wellington, to apprise him of my peculiar situation, to state how much the public mind was exasperated, and public feeling inflamed; and that I could not answer for the preservation of France from the scourge of fire and sword, if the design of reseating the

Bourbons on the throne was persevered in. I offered to treat directly with him on any other basis.

The reply of the generalissimo was on this occasion peremptory and negative; he declared that he had orders not to treat on any other terms than the reëstablishment of Louis XVIII. As to the Duke of Orleans, he could only be considered—so Lord Wellington expressed himself—in the light of a royal usurper. This reply, which I carefully concealed from my colleagues, rendered my position still more embarrassing.

On the other hand, our plenipotentiaries, having left Laon on the 26th of June, arrived on the 1st of July at the headquarters of the allied sovereigns at Haguenau. There the sovereigns, not considering it proper to grant them an audience, appointed a commission to hear their proposals. To the question, which I had foreseen could not fail of being addressed to them; "By what right does the nation pretend to expel its king, and choose another sovereign?" they replied, "By a famous example derived from the History of England itself."

Apprised by this question of the disposition of the allies, the national plenipotentiaries exerted themselves less to obtain Napoleon II., than to repel Louis XVIII. They insinuated, in fact, that the nation might accept the Duke of Orleans or the King of Saxony, if it was not permitted to secure the throne to the son of Maria-Louisa. After several unimportant parleys, they were dismissed with a note, implying, that the allied court could not, for the present, enter into any negotiation; that they considered it as a *sine qua non,* that Napoleon should be placed for the future out of a condition to disturb the repose of France and Europe; and that, after the events which had occurred in March, the allied powers found it their duty to demand that he should be placed under their superintendence.

The committee of government then found itself frustrated in its hope of obtaining the Duke of Orleans or Napoleon II. Even before the return of the plenipotentiaries, I was directly informed of the real intentions of the allied powers.

I employed myself from that time in imparting such a direction to the course of events as should cause them to

terminate in a result at once most favorable to my country and to myself. I had demanded an armistice, and with that view sent commissioners to the allied generals, who had just commenced the siege of the capital. Blucher and Wellington eluded every proposal on the subject, raising more than objections against the government of Napoleon II.; adverting to Louis XVIII. as the only sovereign who appeared to them calculated to unite in his person all the conditions which would prevent Europe from exacting future pledges for its security; and vehemently complaining of the presence of Bonaparte at Paris, in contempt of his abdication.

That personage, as if a fatality impelled him to plunge into the abyss which yawned before him, had, in the first instance, persevered, instead of precipitately gaining one of our seaports, in remaining at the palace of the Elysée; and subsequently at Malmaison, in the protracted hope of repossessing himself of authority, if not as emperor, at least as general. Urged by fanatical friends, he even went so far as to address to us a formal demand of that description. It was then that I exclaimed, before a full meeting of the committee: "This man is mad to a certainty! Does he wish, then, to involve us in his ruin?" And here I am bound to say, that the whole committee, even Carnot himself, voted with me for a definite resolution to be taken with respect to him. His actions were superintended, and Davoust was determined to arrest him on the least attempt which he might make to seduce the army from us.

It was so much the more incumbent upon us to take a decisive step with reference to him, as the enemy's cavalry, pushing their detachments even as far as the environs of Malmaison, might capture him from one moment to another; and some share in such an event would not have failed to be imputed to myself. It was necessary to negotiate for his departure, and to send a general officer to superintend it. The result is known. This short explanation of facts will be sufficient to rebut the accusations of blind and malicious detractors, who, perceiving some resemblance between the captivity of Napoleon and that of Perseus, king of Macedonia, have attributed the former to treacherous combinations, which, computing days and hours, delivered him into

the hands of the English through the operation of an underhanded and skillfully-concluded intrigue.

We hoped, after the departure of Napoleon, to be able to obtain an armistice,—but it was not so. It was then that I wrote the two letters, which have been made public, to each of the generals-in-chief of the besieging armies. It may be remarked in those letters, wherein I feigned, in conformity with the necessity of the case, to plead the cause of Napoleon II., that I considered the question irrevocably decided in favor of the Bourbons; but, in order to lull the vigilance of parties, it was indispensable for me to exhibit the appearance of alternately leaning towards the younger branch and the reigning branch. I hoped, moreover, that by aiding Louis XVIII. to remount the throne, I should induce that prince to detach some dangerous individuals from his presence, and to make new concessions to France, reserving to myself, if I could obtain nothing, the means of subsequently recurring to other combinations.

In such a crisis, was it not deserving well of the country, to replace France, without effusion of blood, under the authority of Louis XVIII.? Were we to wait till foreign armies delivered us bound hand and foot into the hands of our adversaries? I succeeded, by dint of insinuations and promises, in persuading men, who, till that moment, had been intractable.

After having capitulated with the foreigners, it was necessary to capitulate with the army, who, at the very moment of marching to the Loire, mutinied, in order to extort from us their arrears of pay; thanks to a few millions, advanced by the banker Lafitte, the mutineers were disarmed, and the needy satisfied. Meantime, all the emissaries and agents of the king, and among the rest, M. de Vitrolles, with whom Davoust and myself conferred, assured us, that the king would shut his eyes upon all that had passed, and that a general reconciliation would be the earnest of his return. I had already conquered many unfavorable feelings by the aid of these promises, when the royal proclamations, dated from Cambray, and printed by order of the chambers, made their appearance.

This event created a new embarrassment in my position,

with regard to the chamber of representatives, who exhibited an increasing hostility against the Bourbons. We soon learnt, at the return of our agents and commissioners, that Wellington and Blucher declared, in an unqualified manner, that the authority of the chambers and the commissions proceeded from an illegitimate source, and that consequently the best thing they could do was to dissolve themselves, and proclaim Louis XVIII.

The commission, then, at the instance of Carnot, deliberated, if it would not be proper to join the chambers and the army behind the Loire. I vehemently contended against this proposal, which would infallibly have rekindled the flames of foreign and domestic war. I maintained that so desperate a project would ruin France; that I was, moreover, satisfied that the greater part of the generals would not subscribe to it, and affirmed that I would be the last to quit Paris. Induced by my arguments, the commission took the more wise and prudent course of waiting the issue of events in Paris.

As soon as the convention of Paris was signed, the Duke of Wellington being informed of my wish to confer with him, expressed an inclination to come to an understanding with me respecting the execution of the convention. The Commission of the government did not object to an interview which took place at the *Château de Neuilly*. On that occasion, I frankly opened my mind to the generalissimo of the allies. I well knew the power of the words moderation and clemency on noble minds; and, without seeking to diminish the culpability of those who had betrayed the Bourbons, I maintained that the reëstablished throne could only derive consolidation from an entire oblivion of the past. I represented how formidable and menacing the energy of the patriots still was, and referred to the moderate means which would be necessary in order to calm their effervescence; I did not disguise the weakness of the royalists, their intractibility and their prejudices; and I affirmed that there was no others means of restoring tranquillity, than by opposing reactions and resentments, and by leaving no faction to indulge the hope of predominating in the state. I claimed the execution of the two authentic declarations of England and Aus-

tria, purporting that their intention was not to continue the war with a design of reëstablishing the Bourbons, or imposing on France any government whatsoever.

The generalissimo replied, that that declaration had no other object but that of preventing war, and was resorted to in the hope that France would not take up arms in the cause of Napoleon, after he had been outlawed by the congress; but that, as we had risen in his favor, we had by that means liberated the allies from an engagement purely conditional. This sophistry did not leave a doubt upon my mind that we had been played upon. Lord Wellington declared to me, without qualification, that the allied powers had formally decided in favor of Louis XVIII., and that that sovereign would make his entry into Paris on the 8th of July. General Pozzo di Borgo, who was present, repeated the same declaration on behalf of the Emperor of Russia; he communicated to me a letter from Prince Metternich and the Count de Nesselrode, expressive of a determination to recognize no one but Louis XVIII., and not to admit of any proposal at variance with the rights of that monarch.

I then insisted on a general amnesty, and required guarantees. On these conditions I consented to serve the king, and even to give him such pledges as might be consistent with my reputation and honor. The generalissimo answered me, that he was determined to dismiss M. de Blacas, and that I should compose part of the council, as well as M. de Talleyrand, the king having condescended to continue me in my office of general police; but he did not disguise from me that all kinds of measures were taken, in order that Napoleon might fall, as a hostage, into the power of the allies, and that it was required of me that I should do nothing to favor his escape. It was also required that the army should submit itself to the king, and that, for the sake of example, a few of its chiefs should be subjected to punishment. To this I objected; I protested, that if Bonaparte had not made his appearance, a crisis would have equally ensued. All my objections failed in shaking a thoroughly made up resolution. I regarded the evil to be without remedy, but at all events capable of being palliated by my presence in the council. The duke announced to me, that the next day he

would himself present me to his majesty, or at least convey me in his carriage to the Château d'Arnouville. I replied that it was my intention to address a letter to the king, which I had composed, and which I communicated to him. It was conceived in the following terms:—

"Sire,—The return of your majesty leaves no other duty to be performed by the members of the government, than that of divesting themselves of their functions. For the exoneration of my conscience, it is my request that I may be permitted faithfully to describe the state of public opinion and feeling in France.

"It is not your majesty who is dreaded, since you have seen, during the space of eleven months, that a confidence in your majesty's moderation and justice sustained the French people, in the midst of the terror which the proceedings of a portion of your court were calculated to inspire.

"It is universally known, that intelligence and experience are not wanting in your majesty; you understand France and the times; you understand the power of opinion; but your condescension has too often induced you to listen to the pretensions of those who followed you into adversity.

"From that time, France was divided into two nations. It was, doubtless, a painful task for your majesty to be continually obliged to repress the above pretensions by acts resulting from your own will. How many times must you have regretted that it was not in your power to oppose them by national laws.

"If the same system be reproduced, and, if deriving all your powers from hereditary title, your majesty will not recognize any rights of the people but such as originate from concessions of the crown, France, as she was before, will be uncertain as to the nature of her duties; she will continue to waver between her love for her country and her love for her prince; between her inclination and her experience. Her obedience will have no other basis than her personal confidence in your majesty; and, if that confidence be sufficient to maintain respect, it is likewise by such means that dynasties acquire consolidation, and that dangers are averted. Sire, your majesty has experienced that those who urge the steps of power beyond its proper limits are very inadequate to

sustain it when it is shaken; that authority impairs itself by a continual contest, which compels it to retrograde in all its proceedings; that the fewer rights are left to the people, the more its well-founded distrust prompts it to preserve those which cannot be disputed; and that it is always by such means as these that loyalty becomes enfeebled, and that revolutions are matured.

"We conjure you, Sire, deign for this once to consult nothing but your own sense of justice and your own enlightened judgment. Be persuaded that the French people attach in these days as much importance to their liberty as to their life. They will never consider themselves free, if there be not rights, equally inviolable, interposed between them and the claims of power. Have we not had, under your dynasty, states-general independent of the monarch?

"Sire, your wisdom cannot wait for events, in order to make concessions. Under such circumstances, they would be prejudicial to your interests, and probably, increase in their extent. Concessions made now would soothe and pacify the public mind, and give force to royal authority—at a later period, concessions would only prove its weakness: they would be extorted by disorder; and the public mind would retain its anger."

This letter was addressed on that very day to his majesty. At my return to Paris, I declared to the commission that the return of Louis XVIII. was inevitable; that such was the determined resolution of the allied powers, and that the time was even fixed for the second day following. I concealed from them that I was retained in office; a circumstance which, instead of being considered in the light of a guarantee to the patriots, and a species of transition, which would enable the legitimate government, with a less violent shock, to succeed a *de facto* government, would have appeared in the eyes of the fanatics in no other light than the wages of my treason, when, in fact, it was nothing but a well-deserved reward for the safety of Paris.

On that very evening the news was spread, and the same individuals loaded me, in their harangues, with insults and maledictions; the royalists alone addressed me in the language of congratulation. . . . Yes! I repeat, the royalists; and,

among the most distinguished writers of that party, there are some who have since confessed that there was a universal exclamation from all parts, that, had it not been for me there would have been neither security for the king nor safety for France; and that all parties had come to an understanding, to confer the ministry of the police on me.

The next day I repaired to St. Denis, and presented myself at the Château d'Arnouville, in order to have my first audience of the king. I was introduced into his closet by the president of the council, who leant upon my arm. I entreated the king to tranquillize the public mind, by securing to all individuals their personal safety; I represented to him that clemency was no doubt attended with disadvantages, but that the capitulation, just concluded, appeared to demand that any other system should be rejected; that a full and entire amnesty, and without any conditions, appeared to me the only method to impart stability to the state, and durability to the government; that, in this instance, pardon was little more than another word for justice; and that by an amnesty I understood not only an oblivion of offenses, but also a preservation of places, property, honors, and titles.

My discourse seemed to make an impression on the king, who listened to it with unbroken attention. That prince was fully aware of the need in which we stood of skillfulness and tranquillity, in order to reassemble the elements which time and circumstances had dispersed. I thought I perceived that he saw the necessity of throwing a veil over past faults, and of gaining confidence by exemplary moderation and good faith. I made a point of rendering this interview as public as possible, in order to give public opinion an opportunity of foreseeing a probable term to our discords and calamities.

I did not confine myself to entreaties, I went so far as to represent to the king that Paris was in the most violent state of agitation; that there would be danger to his person in showing himself at the gates of the capital with the white cockade, and attended exclusively by the emigrants of Ghent. My plan consisted in maintaining the continuance of the chambers, in prevailing upon the king to

assume the tricolor cockade, and to dismiss all his military household. In a word, it was my wish, as it always had been, to see Louis XVIII. heading the march of the revolution, and so contributing to its consolidation.

These different views were submitted to deliberation in the council; my proposals were only rejected by the majority of a single vote. The king, besides, remained inflexible. Sooner than consent, he declared he would rather return to Hartwell. Accordingly, his military household was not dissolved, and it was decided that the representatives should be expelled next day from the chamber. That chamber had just laid down, in a new bill of rights, the fundamental principles of the constitution which, according to the views it entertained, could alone satisfy the public desire. Although I had not expected much success from my proceedings, because my tact in public affairs had sufficiently apprised me of their tendency, it appeared to me that I ought to neglect nothing for the acquittal of my conscience.

The very evening of the 7th of July, several Prussian battalions forced the gates of the Tuileries, and invaded the courts and the avenues of the palace. The commission of the government, being no longer free, discontinued its functions, and announced the fact by a message. One particular circumstance made this separation of my colleagues remarkable.

Carnot, the most incensed of all in seeing me continued in my office, and placed, as it were, under my *surveillance,* until a place of residence was appointed for him, wrote me the following note: "*Traitor!* where dost thou require me to go?" I answered in the same laconic manner: "Fool! where you please." It must be confessed that I had, in the council, several altercations with Carnot, who never forgave me for having called him an old woman.

The next day, as early as eight o'clock in the morning, the deputies made their appearance, in order to enter the hall of their deliberations; but finding the doors closed, surrounded by guards and *gendarmes,* they withdrew. A few of them repairing to the house of their president, there subscribed a protest.

The king made his public entry into Paris; nothing dis-

turbed the excessive joy of the royalists, who hurried to meet their monarch, and appeared in very considerable numbers. I must confess that my presentiment was, in some degree, deceived, and that all my apprehensions did not receive confirmation. Thus finished the reign of a hundred days, and thus re-commenced a reign which had been interrupted during its first year. But what were the omens which accompanied this new accession? Passions in a state of ferment; resentments thirsting for satiation; interests struggling and contending together; minds in a state of frenzy and rage; in short, ulcerated feelings ready for reaction! In so deplorable a conjuncture, I did not withhold from my country the benefit of my labors and exertions.

The surrender of Bonaparte, the successive submission of all the towns and all the provinces in France, soon announced that the country was pacified in all such respects as could interest the allied sovereigns; but it could not be perfectly so, as regarded the repose and welfare of the king, unless everything was forgotten; unless there was an equal restraint upon all extreme opinions, from whatsoever source those opinions might be derived; and unless, in short, all the parties of the state enjoyed the protection of the laws, with the same certainty and the same security.

Such was the moderation and clemency which I recommended to Louis XVIII. (as I had previously done with Napoleon), at the same time that I proposed efficacious measures for averting the results of all such causes as tended to re-plunge France into the abyss of a new revolution. But every one, either in or out of the council, did not share my views; examples and punishments were considered necessary.

I had already, for a fortnight, constituted a part of the royal administration, when the *ordonnance* of the 24th of July made its appearance; fifty-seven individuals, divided into two categories, were therein proscribed, without trial. It will be asked, how I could countersign such an act, which affected individuals who had pursued the same line of politics as myself. Let it be known, then, that ever since the day following the 8th of July, the desire of proscribing had possessed all classes of the royalist party, from the *salons*

of the Faubourg St. Germain, to the ante-chambers of the palace of the Tuileries, and that thousands of names, obscure as well as notorious, were pointed out to the police department for the purpose of being involved in a general measure of proscription. Heads were demanded of the minister of police, as pledges of his sincere devotion to the royal cause.

There only remained two paths for me to follow; that of making myself an accomplice in acts of vengeance, or that of giving up my office. To the first I could not subscribe; the second, I was too deeply compromised to adopt. I discovered a third expedient, and that was to reduce the list to a small number of names, selected from persons who had acted the most conspicuous part during the late events: and here I must confess that I met in the council, and more especially in the eminently French feelings of the monarch, with everything that was calculated to mitigate those measures of excessive rigor, and to diminish the number of the victims.

But the torrent of reaction threatened to sweep away all the barriers opposed to it. I had conceived the design of acting the part of mediator between the king and the patriots. I soon perceived that the only intention was to make use of me as a necessary instrument for the reëstablishment of a royal power without counterpoise and limit, and which would have offered no guarantee to the men of the revolution. The two *ordonnances,* with regard to the electoral colleges and the elections which were about to furnish France with the chamber of 1815, left me no longer a shadow of doubt upon this point.

It has been thought that I exhibited a culpable neglect in the formation of the electoral colleges; and it has been said that it was not excusable in a statesman like myself, grown old in experience and the exercise of important functions, to commit such a political error, nor to be mistaken as to the bias which the royalist faction, now re-possessed of influence, exerted itself to impart to public opinion. My principles and my anterior conduct ought to have secured me from similar imputations. This accusation as to imprudent carelessness and fatal indifference in such grave conjunctures must be laid to the amiable selfishness and the *nonchalante*

supineness of the president of the council, who indulged himself in sensual illusions, and did not wish to see anything else in the *fauteuil* of a minister, but a resting-place.

I was roused by this; it was then that my notes, addressed to the allied powers, and my reports, presented to the king in full council, appeared to the world. I had drawn them, in conformity with the wishes of the allied sovereigns, in order to supply them with materials for judging of the actual condition of France. The publication of those documents produced a profound sensation on enlightened minds; but their contents exasperated to the highest degree the *ultra-royalist* party, who regarded its influence as lost, if my disclosures led to a change of system. The king himself was displeased at the publicity given to reports of a confidential nature: but I had pre-considered my position; deceived by M. de Vitrolles, whom I had introduced into the king's cabinet, deserted by the president of the council, whom the past did not oblige to sacrifice the present, I perceived that my fall was inevitable, unless I could succeed in giving preponderance to my designs.

Shall I confess it in this place? Yes; I have promised to disguise nothing. My notes and my reports were intended to impart unity and integrity to the dislocated and scattered members of the revolution, and especially to give Europe cause to fear a national insurrection; by that means, I hoped to intimidate her so much, on the score of an explosion, that she would consent to grant us, as the price of a definitive treaty of peace, that which I had never ceased soliciting since the congress of Prague—the dynasty of Napoleon, which had become the single object of our secret demands, of our desires, and of our efforts. The interview of two powerful monarchs contributed to disperse hopes which were not without foundation. It belongs to history to collect and compare circumstances which it does not appertain to me to elucidate. I may say I am summing up my whole life, when I declare that it was my wish to conquer for the revolution, and that the revolution has been conquered in me.

THE END

NAPOLEON BONAPARTE

NAPOLEON BONAPARTE

FRANCE'S FOREMOST MILITARY GENIUS

1768-1821

(INTRODUCTORY NOTE)

Napoleon had always an inclination toward autobiography. Several times he spoke of writing a full narrative of his own career; but he never actually reached the point of doing so. A few days before his death, however, he seemed suddenly impressed with the need of leaving to his son a personal statement of self-explanation and advice; and he dictated the celebrated "Legacy to my Son," which is given here. The fact that it was Napoleon's last work, composed when he knew death was close at hand, lends it a peculiar weight and dignity.

Outside of this remarkable statement, we find our clearest glimpses of the man Napoleon in his letters to his wife, the Empress Josephine. Though he divorced Josephine for the sake of having a son and founding a dynasty, there has never been any question of his genuine devotion to her. She was a young widow when Napoleon first met her, the widow of General Beauharnais, with two children, Eugene and Hortense; and Napoleon seems to have opened his heart to the children also, watching over them affectionately and directing their careers. The first letters to Josephine that have been preserved are those written immediately after their marriage, when the young general, not yet thirty years of age, left his bride so as to take command of the Army of Italy. In this campaign he won his first great military triumph, and his letters to his bride breathe equally of battle and of love. The first such letter that is longer than a mere hurried note, is given here. We include also the first letter written after their divorce, and the letter sent to announce the Emperor's downfall, his retirement to Elba. The contrasted tone of these three addresses to the ever faithful wife of his heart must impress every reader.

NAPOLEON'S FIRST LOVE LETTER TO JOSEPHINE

[Written shortly after the marriage, this is the first surviving letter which contains any personal message beyond a word or two.]

MARMIROLO, July 17, 1796, 9 o'clock, P. M.

I HAVE received your letter, my adorable friend. It has filled my heart with joy. I am grateful to you for the trouble you have taken to send me the news. I hope that you are better to-day. I am sure that you have recovered. I earnestly desire that you should ride on horseback: it can not fail to benefit you.

Since I left you, I have been constantly depressed. My happiness is to be near you. Incessantly I live over in my memory your caresses, your tears, your affectionate solicitude. The charms of the incomparable Josephine kindle continually a burning and a glowing flame in my heart. When, free from all solicitude, all harassing care, shall I be able to pass all my time with you, having only to love you, and to think only of the happiness of so saying, and of proving it to you? I will send you your horse, but I hope you will soon join me. I thought that I loved you months ago, but since my separation from you I feel that I love you a thousand fold more. Each day since I knew you, have I adored you yet more and more. This proves the maxim of Bruyère, that "love comes all of a sudden," to be false. Everything in nature has its own course, and different degrees of growth.

Ah! I entreat you to permit me to see some of your faults. Be less beautiful, less gracious, less affectionate, less good, especially be not over-anxious, and never weep. Your tears rob me of reason, and inflame my blood. Believe me it is not in my power to have a single thought which is not of thee, or a wish which I could not reveal to thee.

Seek repose. Quickly reëstablish your health. Come and join me, that at least. before death, we may be able to say, "We were many days happy." A thousand kisses, and one even to Fortuna, notwithstanding his spitefulness.

BONAPARTE.

THE FIRST LETTER AFTER THE DIVORCE

December, 1809; 8 o'clock in the evening.

My Love—I found you more feeble to-day than you ought to be. You have exhibited much fortitude, and it is necessary that you should still continue to sustain yourself. You must not yield to funereal melancholy. Strive to be tranquil, and above all to preserve your health, which is so precious to me. If you are attached to me, if you love me, you must maintain your energy, and strive to be cheerful. You can not doubt my constancy, and my tender affection. You know too well all the sentiments with which I regard you, to suppose that I can be happy if you are unhappy, that I can be serene if you are agitated. Adieu, my love. May you have peaceful sleep. Believe that I wish it. Napoleon.

THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF DEFEAT

[Written after Napoleon's first overthrow, when he had agreed to retire to the Island of Elba.]

Fontainebleau, April 16, 1814.

Dear Josephine—I wrote to you on the 8th of this month (it was a Friday), and perhaps you have not received my letter. Hostilities still continued; possibly it may have been intercepted. At present, communications must be reëstablished. I have formed my resolution. I have no doubt that this billet will reach you. I will not repeat what I said to you. There I lamented my situation; now I congratulate myself thereon. My head and spirit are freed from an enormous weight. My fall is great, but at least it is useful, as men say. In my retreat, I shall substitute the pen for the sword. The history of my reign will be curious. The world has yet seen me only in profile; I shall show myself in full.

How many things have I to disclose! how many are the men of whom a fatal estimate is entertained! I have heaped benefits upon millions of wretches. What have they done in the end for me? They have all betrayed me; yes, all. I except from the number the good Eugene, so worthy of you and of me. Adieu, my dear Josephine. Be resigned, as I am,

and ever remember him who never forgets, and never will forget you. Farewell Josephine. NAPOLEON.

NAPOLEON'S FINAL REVIEW OF HIS CAREER

[Written a few days before his death as his final legacy and counsel to his son.]

My son should not think of avenging my death. He should profit by it. Let the remembrance of what I have done never leave his mind. Let him always be like me, every inch a Frenchman. The aim of all his efforts should be to reign by peace. If he should recommence my wars out of pure love of imitation, and without any absolute necessity, he would be a mere ape. To do my work over again would be to suppose that I had done nothing. To complete it, on the contrary, would be to show the solidity of the basis, and explain the whole plan of an edifice which I had only roughly sketched. The same thing is not done twice in a century. I was obliged to daunt Europe by my arms. In the present day the way is to convince her. I saved the revolution which was about to perish. I raised it from its ruins and showed it to the world beaming with glory. I have implanted new ideas in France and in Europe. They cannot retrograde. Let my son bring into blossom all that I have sown. Let him develop all the elements of prosperity enclosed in the soil of France, and by these means he may yet be a great sovereign.

The Bourbons will not maintain their position after my death. A reaction in my favor will take place everywhere, even in England. This reaction will be a fine inheritance for my son. It is possible that the English, in order to efface the remembrance of their persecutions, will favor my son's return to France. But in order to live in a good understanding with England, it is necessary at any cost to favor her commercial interests. This necessity leads to one of these two consequences—war with England, or a sharing of the commerce of the world with her. This second condition is the only one possible in the present day. The exterior question will long take precedence in France of the interior. I bequeath to my son sufficient strength and sym-

pathy to enable him to continue my work with the single aid of an elevated and conciliatory diplomacy.

His position at Vienna is deplorable. Will Austria set him at liberty unconditionally? But after all, Francis I. was once in a more critical position, and yet his French nationality was nothing impaired by it. Let not my son ever mount the throne by the aid of foreign influence. His aim should be not to fulfill a desire to reign, but to deserve the approbation of posterity. Let him cherish an intimacy with my family, whenever it shall be in his power. My mother is a woman of the old school. Joseph and Eugene are able to give him good counsel. Hortense and Catherine are superior women. If he remains in exile, let him marry one of my nieces. If France recalls him, let him seek the hand of a Princess of Russia. This court is the only one where family ties rule policy. The alliance which he may contract should tend to increase the exterior influence of France, and not to introduce a foreign influence into its councils. The French nation, when it is not taken the wrong way, is more easily governed than any other. Its prompt and easy comprehension is unequaled. It immediately discerns who labors for and who against it. But then it is necessary always to speak to its senses, otherwise its uneasy spirit gnaws; it explodes and ferments. My son will arrive after a time of civil troubles. He has but one party to fear, that of the Duke of Orleans. This party has been germinating for a long time. Let him despise all parties, and only see the mass of the people. Excepting those who have betrayed their country, he ought to forget the previous conduct of all men, and reward talent, merit, and services wherever he finds them. Chateaubriand, notwithstanding his libel, is a good Frenchman.

France is the country where the chiefs of parties have the least influence. To rest for support on them is to build on sand. Great things can only be done in France by having the support of the *mass of the people.* Besides, a government should always seek support where it is really to be found. There are moral laws as inflexible and imperious as the physical ones. The Bourbons can only rely for support on the nobles and the priest, whatever may be the constitu-

tion which they are made to adopt. The water will descend again to its level, in spite of the machine which has raised it for a moment. I, on the contrary, relied on the whole mass of the people without exception. I set the example of a government which favored the interests of all. I did not govern by the help of, or solely for either the nobles, the priests, the citizens, or tradesmen. I governed for the whole community, for the whole family of the French nation.

My nobility will afford no support to my son. I required more than one generation to succeed in making them assume my color, and preserve, by tradition, the sacred deposit of my moral conquests. From the year 1815, all the grandees openly espoused the opposite party. I felt no reliance either on my marshals or my nobility, not even on my colonels; but the whole mass of the people, and the whole army, up to the grade of captain, were on my side. I was not deceived in feeling this confidence. They owe much to me. I was their true representative. My dictatorship was indispensable. The proof of this is, that they always offered me more power than I desired. In the present day there is nothing possible in France but what is necessary. It will not be the same with my son. His power will be disputed. He must anticipate every desire for liberty. It is, besides, easier in ordinary times to reign with the help of the Chambers than alone. The Assemblies take a great part of your responsibility, and nothing is more easy than always to have the majority on your side; but care must be taken not to demoralize the country. The influence of the government in France is immense; and if it understands the way, it has no need of employing corruption in order to find support on all sides. The aim of a sovereign is not only to reign, but to diffuse instruction, morality, and well-being. Anything false is but a bad aid.

In my youth, I too entertained some illusions; but I soon recovered from them. The great orators who rule the assemblies by the brilliance of their eloquence, are, in general, men of the most mediocre political talents. They should not be opposed in their own way, for they have always more noisy words at command than you. Their eloquence should be opposed by a serious and logical argument. Their strength

lies in vagueness. They should be brought back to the reality of facts. Practical arguments destroy them. In the Council there were men possessed of much more eloquence than I was. I always defeated them by this simple argument—*two and two make four.*

France possesses very clever practical men. The only thing necessary is to find them, and to give them the means of reaching the proper station. One is at the plow, who ought to be in the council, and another is minister who ought to be at the plow. Let not my son be astonished to hear men, the most reasonable to all appearance, propose to him the most absurd plans. From the agrarian law to the despotism of the Grand Turk, every system finds an apologist in France. Let him listen to them all; let him take everything at its just value, and surround himself by all the real capacity of the country. The French people are influenced by two powerful passions—the love of liberty and the love of distinction. These, though seemingly opposed, are derived from one and the same feeling, a government can only satisfy these two wants by the most exact justice. The law and action of the government must be equal towards all. Honors and rewards must be conferred on the men who seem in the eyes of all to be most worthy of them. Merit may be pardoned, but not intrigue. The order of the Legion of Honor has been an immense and powerful incitement to virtue, talent, and courage. If ill employed, it would become a great evil by alienating the whole army, if the spirit of court intrigue and coterie presided at its nominations or in its administrations.

My son will be obliged to allow the liberty of the press. This is a necessity in the present day. In order to govern, it is not necessary to pursue a more or less perfect theory, but to build with the materials which are under one's hand; to submit to necessities and profit by them. The liberty of the press ought to become, in the hands of the government, a powerful auxiliary in diffusing, through all the most distant corners of the empire, sound doctrines and good principles. To leave it to itself would be to fall asleep on the brink of a danger. On the conclusion of a general peace, I would have instituted a Directory of the Press, composed of the ablest men of the country; and I would have diffused, even to the

most distant hamlet, my ideas and my intentions. In the present day it is impossible to remain as one might have done three hundred years ago—a quiet spectator of the transformations of society. Now one must, under the pain of death, either direct or hinder everything.

My son ought to be a man of new ideas, and of the cause which I have made triumphant everywhere. He ought to establish institutions which shall efface all traces of the feudal law, secure the dignity of man, and develop those germs of prosperity which have been budding for centuries. He should propagate in all those countries uncivilized and barbarous, the benefits of Christianity and civilization. Such should be the aim of all my son's thoughts. Such is the cause for which I die a martyr to the hatred of the oligarchs, of which I am the object. Let him consider the holiness of my cause. Look at the regicides! They were formerly in the councils of a Bourbon. To-morrow they will return to their country, and I and mine expiate in torture the blessings which I desired to bestow on nations. My enemies are the enemies of humanity. They desire to fetter the people, whom they regard as a flock of sheep. They endeavor to oppress France, and to make the stream re-ascend towards its source. Let them take care that it does not burst its bounds.

With my son, all opposite interests may live in peace; new ideas be diffused and gather strength, without any violent shock, or the sacrifice of any victims, and humanity be spared dreadful misfortunes. But if the blind hatred of kings still pursues my blood after my death, I shall then be avenged, but cruelly avenged. Civilization will suffer in every way, if nations burst their bounds, and rivers of blood will be shed throughout the whole of Europe; the lights of science and knowledge will be extinguished amid civil and foreign warfare. More than three hundred years of troubles will be required in order to destroy in Europe that royal authority which has, but for a day, represented the interests of all classes of men, but which struggled for several centuries before it could throw off all the restraints of the Middle Ages. If, on the other hand, the North advances against civilization, the struggle will be of shorter duration, but the blows more fatal. The well-being of nations, all the results which it has

taken so many years to obtain, will be destroyed, and none can foresee the disastrous consequences. The accession of my son is for the interest of nations, as well as kings. Beyond the circle of ideas and principles for which we have fought, and which I have carried triumphantly through all difficulties, I see nought but slavery and confusion for France and for the whole of Europe.

You will publish all that I have dictated or written, and you will engage my son to read and reflect upon it. You will tell him to protect all those who have served me well, and their number is large. My poor soldiers, so devoted, so magnanimous, are now, perhaps, in want of bread! What buried riches, which will, perhaps, never again see the light of day! Europe is progressing toward an inevitable transformation. To endeavor to retard this progress would be but to lose strength by a useless struggle. To favor it is to strengthen the hopes and wishes of all.

There are desires of nationality which must be satisfied sooner or later. It is towards this end that continual progress should be made. My son's position will not be exempt from immense difficulties. Let him do by general consent what I was compelled by circumstances to effect by force of arms. When I was victorious over Russia, in 1812, the problem of a peace of a hundred years' duration was solved. I cut the Gordian knot of nations. In the present day it must be untied. The remembrance of the thrones which I raised up, when it was for the general interest of my policy so to do, should be effaced. In the year 1815, I exacted from my brothers that they should forget their royalty, and only take the title of French princes. My son should follow this example. An opposite course would excite just alarm.

It is no longer in the North that great questions will be resolved, but in the Mediterranean. There, there is enough to content all the ambition of the different powers; and the happiness of civilized nations may be purchased with fragments of barbarous lands. Let the kings listen to reason. Europe will no longer afford matter for maintaining international hatreds. Prejudices are dissipated and intermingled. Routes of commerce are becoming multiplied. It is no longer possible for one nation to monopolize it. As a means by

which my son may see whether his administration be good or the contrary, whether his laws are in accordance with the manners of the country, let him have an annual and particular report presented to him of the number of condemnations pronounced by the tribunals. If crimes and delinquencies increase in number, it is a proof that misery is on the increase, and that society is ill governed. Their diminution, on the other hand, is a proof of the contrary.

Religious ideas have more influence than certain narrow-minded philosophers are willing to believe. They are capable of rendering great services to humanity. By standing well with the Pope an influence is still maintained over the consciences of a hundred millions of men. Pius VII. will be always well-disposed towards my son. He is a tolerant and enlightened old man. Fatal circumstances embroiled our cabinets; I regret this deeply. Cardinal Fesch did not understand me. He upheld the party of the *Ultramontanes*, the enemies of true religion in France. If you are permitted to return to France, you will still find many who have remained faithful to my memory. The best monuments which they could raise to me would be to make a collection of all the ideas which I expressed in the Council of State for the administration of the empire; to collect all my instructions to my ministers, and to make a list of the works which I undertook, which I raised in France and Italy. In what I have said in the Council of State, a distinction must be made, between the measures good only for the moment, and those the application of which is eternally true.

Let my son often read and reflect on history. This is the only true philosophy. Let him read and meditate on the wars of the greatest captains. This is the only means of rightly learning the science of war. But all that you say to him, or all that he learns will be of little use to him if he has not in the depth of his heart that sacred fire and love of good which alone can effect great things. I will hope, however, that he will be worthy of his destiny.

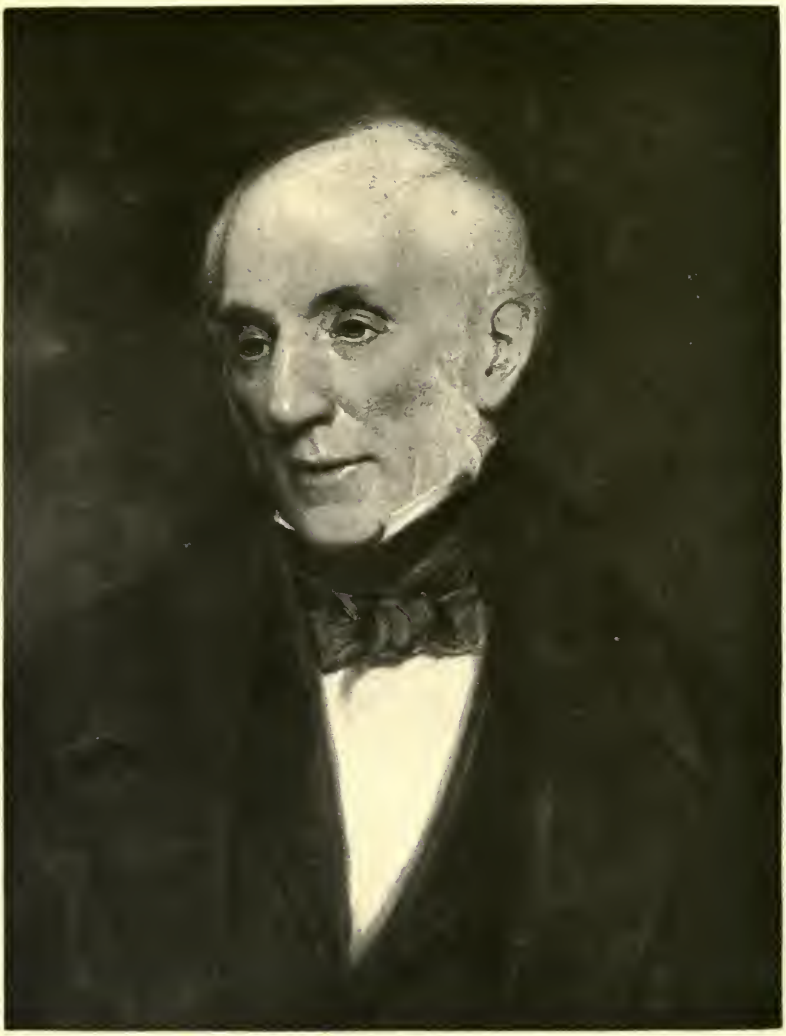
THE END

THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON

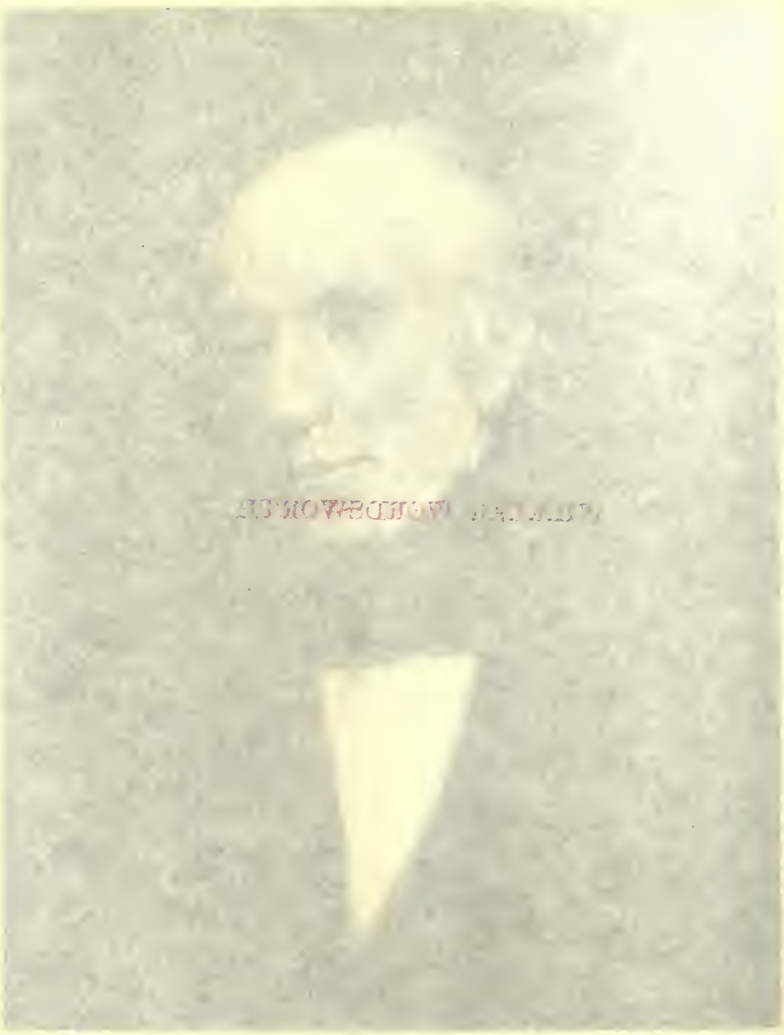
ing about us as if they had been our own. I never saw the British infantry behave so well.

Boney is now off, I believe, to Rochefort, to go to America; the army, about forty thousand or fifty thousand, are in Paris; Blucher on the left of the Seine, and I with my right in front of St. Denis, and the left upon the Bois de Bondy. They have fortified St. Denis and Montmartre very strongly. The canal De l'Ourcq is filled with water, and they have a parapet and batteries on the bank, so that I do not believe we can attack this line; however, I will see.—Believe me, etc.

WELLINGTON.



WILLIAM WORDSWORTH



WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

THE GREATEST OF NATURE POETS

1770-1850

(INTRODUCTORY NOTE)

What could be more fitting for a great poet than to write in verse the story of his own life, the study of his own mental and spiritual development. Yet the only really great poem we have of this type is the one here given. Byron attempted some study of himself in his "Childe Harold," but it remained for Wordsworth, the "Quaker poet," the most profound and yet the most simple and straightforward of men, to examine himself thus honestly and earnestly, and give to the world a poem of frank self-revelation. He calls this poem "The Prelude," explaining that as his whole poetry was a study of the inner life of man, so this study of his own early life was a sort of prelude to all his other poetic studies. He followed it with a somewhat similar poem of his later life, called "The Recluse."

The reason "The Prelude" has not ordinarily been included in writings on autobiography is probably because it so often turns from speaking of Wordsworth's past life to describe instead his visions of the present and the future. Hence, the effort is here made to bring "The Prelude" more clearly into the hands of students of autobiography by presenting only the personal sections of the poem.

Wordsworth was left an orphan at a very early age. His sister Dorothy, so often mentioned in "The Prelude," was a year younger than he and devoted her life to being his companion. The "friend" repeatedly addressed in the poem is Wordsworth's beloved fellow-poet Coleridge. In 1802 Wordsworth married Mary Hutchinson, a childhood's friend, and in 1805 he began "The Prelude." It, however, makes no mention of his wife, because it studies only his development during the earlier period of his life.

THE PRELUDE,

OR GROWTH OF A POET'S MIND: AN AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL POEM

BOOK FIRST

INTRODUCTION—CHILDHOOD AND SCHOOL-TIME

O THERE is blessing in this gentle breeze,
A visitant that while it fans my cheek
Doth seem half-conscious of the joy it brings
From the green fields, and from yon azure sky.
Whate'er its mission, the soft breeze can come
To none more grateful than to me; escaped
From the vast city, where I long had pined
A discontented sojourner: now free,
Free as a bird to settle where I will.
What dwelling shall receive me? in what vale
Shall be my harbor? underneath what grove
Shall I take up my home? and what clear stream
Shall with its murmur lull me into rest?
The earth is all before me. With a heart
Joyous, nor scared at its own liberty,
I look about; and should the chosen guide
Be nothing better than a wandering cloud,
I cannot miss my way. I breathe again!
Trances of thought and mountings of the mind
Come fast upon me: it is shaken off,
That burthen of my own unnatural self,
The heavy weight of many a weary day
Not mine, and such as were not made for me.
Long months of peace (if such bold word accord
With any promises of human life),
Long months of ease and undisturbed delight
Are mine in prospect; whither shall I turn,
By road or pathway, or through trackless field,
Up hill or down, or shall some floating thing
Upon the river point me out my course?

Dear Liberty! Yet what would it avail
But for a gift that consecrates the joy?

For I, methought, while the sweet breath of heaven
Was blowing on my body, felt within
A correspondent breeze, that gently moved
With quickening virtue, but is now become
A tempest, a redundant energy,
Vexing its own creation. Thanks to both,
And their congenial powers, that, while they join
In breaking up a long-continued frost,
Bring with them vernal promises, the hope
Of active days urged on by flying hours,—
Days of sweet leisure, taxed with patient thought
Abstruse, nor wanting punctual service high,
Matins and vespers of harmonious verse!

Thus far, O Friend! did I, not used to make
A present joy the matter of a song,
Pour forth that day my soul in measured strains
That would not be forgotten, and are here
Recorded: to the open fields I told
A prophecy: poetic numbers came
Spontaneously to clothe in priestly robe
A renovated spirit singled out,
Such hope was mine, for holy services.
My own voice cheered me, and, far more, the mind's
Internal echo of the imperfect sound;
To both I listened, drawing from them both
A cheerful confidence in things to come. . . .

When, as becomes a man who would prepare
For such an arduous work, I through myself
Make rigorous inquisition, the report
Is often cheering; for I neither seem
To lack that first great gift, the vital soul,
Nor general Truths, which are themselves a sort
Of Elements and Agents, Under-powers,
Subordinate helpers of the living mind:
Nor am I naked of external things,
Forms, images, nor numerous other aids
Of less regard, though won perhaps with toil
And needful to build up a Poet's praise.
Time, place, and manners do I seek, and these

Are found in plenteous store, but nowhere such
As may be singled out with steady choice;
No little band of yet remembered names
Whom I, in perfect confidence, might hope
To summon back from lonesome banishment,
And make them dwellers in the hearts of men
Now living, or to live in future years.
Sometimes the ambitious Power of choice, mistaking
Proud spring-tide swellings for a regular sea,
Will settle on some British theme, some old
Romantic tale by Milton left unsung. . . .

Sometimes it suits me better to invent
A tale from my own heart, more near akin
To my own passions and habitual thoughts;
Some variegated story, in the main
Lofty, but the unsubstantial structure melts
Before the very sun that brightens it,
Mist into air dissolving! Then a wish,
My last and favorite aspiration, mounts
With yearning toward some philosophic song
Of Truth that cherishes our daily life;
With meditations passionate from deep
Recesses in man's heart, immortal verse
Thoughtfully fitted to the Orphean lyre;
But from this awful burthen I full soon
Take refuge and beguile myself with trust
That mellower years will bring a riper mind
And clearer insight. Thus my days are past
In contradiction; with no skill to part
Vague longing, haply bred by want of power,
From paramount impulse not to be withstood,
A timorous capacity from prudence,
From circumspection, infinite delay.
Humility and modest awe themselves
Betray me, serving often for a cloak
To a more subtle selfishness; that now
Locks every function up in blank reserve,
Now dupes me, trusting to an anxious eye
That with intrusive restlessness beats off

Simplicity and self-presented truth.
Ah! better far than this, to stray about
Voluptuously through fields and rural walks,
And ask no record of the hours, resigned
To vacant musing, unreproved neglect
Of all things, and deliberate holiday.
Far better never to have heard the name
Of zeal and just ambition, than to live
Baffled and plagued by a mind that every hour
Turns recreant to her task; takes heart again,
Then feels immediately some hollow thought
Hang like an interdict upon her hopes.
This is my lot; for either still I find
Some imperfection in the chosen theme,
Or see of absolute accomplishment
Much wanting, so much wanting, in myself,
That I recoil and droop, and seek repose
In listlessness from vain perplexity,
Unprofitably traveling toward the grave,
Like a false steward who hath much received
And renders nothing back.

Was it for this
That one, the fairest of all rivers, loved
To blend his murmurs with my nurse's song,
And, from his alder shades and rocky falls,
And from his fords and shallows, sent a voice
That flowed along my dreams? For this, didst thou,
O Derwent! winding among grassy holms
Where I was looking on, a babe in arms,
Make ceaseless music that composed my thoughts
To more than infant softness, giving me
Amid the fretful dwellings of mankind
A foretaste, a dim earnest, of the calm
That Nature breathes among the hills and groves?
When he had left the mountains and received
On his smooth breast the shadow of those towers
That yet survive, a shattered monument
Of feudal sway, the bright blue river passed
Along the margin of our terrace walk;

A tempting playmate whom we dearly loved
Oh, many a time have I, a five years' child,
In a small mill-race severed from his stream,
Made one long bathing of a summer's day;
Basked in the sun, and plunged and basked aga'
Alternate, all a summer's day, or scoured
The sandy fields, leaping through flowery groves
Of yellow ragwort; or when rock and hill,
The woods, and distant Skiddaw's lofty height,
Were bronzed with deepest radiance, stood alone
Beneath the sky, as if I had been born
On Indian plains, and from my mother's hut
Had run abroad in wantonness, to sport
A naked savage, in the thunder shower.

Fair seed-time had my soul, and I grew up
Fostered alike by beauty and by fear:
Much favored in my birth-place, and no less
In that beloved Vale to which erelong
We were transplanted—there were we let loose
For sports of wider range. Ere I had told
Ten birth-days, when among the mountain slopes
Frost, and the breath of frosty wind, had snapped
The last autumnal crocus, 'twas my joy
With store of springes o'er my shoulder hung
To range the open heights where woodcocks run
Along the smooth green turf. Through half the night,
Scudding away from snare to snare, I plied
That anxious visitation;—moon and stars
Were shining o'er my head. I was alone,
And seemed to be a trouble to the peace
That dwelt among them. Sometimes it befel
In these night wanderings, that a strong desire
O'erpowered my better reason, and the bird
Which was the captive of another's toil
Became my prey; and when the deed was done
I heard among the solitary hills
Low breathings coming after me, and sounds
Of undistinguishable motion, steps
Almost as silent as the turf they trod.

Nor less when spring had warmed the cultured Vale,
Moved we as plunderers where the mother-bird
Had in high places built her lodge; though mean
Our object and inglorious, yet the end
Was not ignoble. Oh! when I have hung
Above the raven's nest, by knots of grass
And half-inch fissures in the slippery rock
But ill sustained, and almost (so it seemed)
Suspended by the blast that blew amain,
Shouldering the naked crag, oh, at that time
While on the perilous ridge I hung alone,
With what strange utterance did the loud dry wind
Blow through my ear! the sky seemed not a sky
Of earth—and with what motion moved the clouds!

Dust as we are, the immortal spirit grows
Like harmony in music; there is a dark
Inscrutable workmanship that reconciles
Discordant elements, makes them cling together
In one society. How strange that all
The terrors, pains, and early miseries,
Regrets, vexations, lassitudes interfused
Within my mind, should e'er have borne a part.
And that a needful part, in making up
The calm existence that is mine when I
Am worthy of myself! Praise to the end!
Thanks to the means which Nature deigned to employ;
Whether her fearless visitings, or those
That came with soft alarm, like hurtless light
Opening the peaceful clouds; or she may use
Severer interventions, ministry
More palpable, as best might suit her aim.

One summer evening (led by her) I found
A little boat tied to a willow tree
Within a rocky cave, its usual home.
Straight I unloosed her chain, and stepping in
Pushed from the shore. It was an act of stealth
And troubled pleasure, nor without the voice
Of mountain-echoes did my boat move on;

Leaving behind her still, on either side,
Small circles glittering idly in the moon,
Until they melted all into one track
Of sparkling light. But now, like one who rows,
Proud of his skill, to reach a chosen point
With an unswerving line, I fixed my view
Upon the summit of a craggy ridge,
The horizon's utmost boundary; far above
Was nothing but the stars and the gray sky.
She was an elfin pinnace; lustily
I dipped my oars into the silent lake,
And, as I rose upon the stroke, my boat
Went heaving through the water like a swan;
When, from behind that craggy steep till then
The horizon's bound, a huge peak, black and huge,
As if with voluntary power instinct
Upreared its head. I struck and struck again,
And growing still in stature the grim shape
Towered up between me and the stars, and still,
For so it seemed, with purpose of its own
And measured motion like a living thing,
Strode after me. With trembling oars I turned,
And through the silent water stole my way
Back to the covert of the willow tree;
There in her mooring-place I left my bark,—
And through the meadows homeward went, in grave
And serious mood; but after I had seen
That spectacle, for many days, my brain
Worked with a dim and undetermined sense
Of unknown modes of being; o'er my thoughts
There hung a darkness, call it solitude
Or blank desertion. No familiar shapes
Remained, no pleasant images of trees,
Of sea or sky, no colors of green fields;
But huge and mighty forms, that do not live
Like living men, moved slowly through the mind
By day, and were a trouble to my dreams.

Wisdom and Spirit of the universe!
Thou Soul that art the eternity of thought,

That givest to forms and images a breath
And everlasting motion, not in vain
By day or star-light thus from my first dawn
Of childhood didst thou intertwine for me
The passions that build up our human soul;
Not with the mean and vulgar works of man,
But with high objects, with enduring things—
With life and nature—purifying thus
The elements of feeling and of thought,
And sanctifying, by such discipline,
Both pain and fear, until we recognize
A grandeur in the beatings of the heart.
Nor was this fellowship vouchsafed to me
With stinted kindness. In November days,
When vapors rolling down the valley made
A lonely scene more lonesome, among woods,
At noon and 'mid the calm of summer nights,
When, by the margin of the trembling lake,
Beneath the gloomy hills homeward I went
In solitude, such intercourse was mine;
Mine was it in the fields both day and night,
And by the waters, all the summer long.

And in the frosty season, when the sun
Was set, and visible for many a mile
The cottage windows blazed through twilight gloom,
I heeded not their summons: happy time
It was indeed for all of us—for me
It was a time of rapture! Clear and loud
The village clock tolled six,—I wheeled about,
Proud and exulting like an untired horse
That cares not for his home. All shod with steel,
We hissed along the polished ice in games
Confederate, imitative of the chase
And woodland pleasures,—the resounding horn,
The pack loud chiming, and the hunted hare.
So through the darkness and the cold we flew,
And not a voice was idle; with the din
Smitten, the precipices rang aloud;
The leafless trees and every icy crag

Tinkled like iron; while far distant hills
Into the tumult sent an alien sound
Of melancholy not unnoticed, while the stars
Eastward were sparkling clear, and in the west
The orange sky of evening died away.
Not seldom from the uproar I retired
Into a silent bay, or sportively
Glanced sideway, leaving the tumultuous throng,
To cut across the reflex of a star
That fled, and, flying still before me, gleamed
Upon the glassy plain; and oftentimes,
When we had given our bodies to the wind,
And all the shadowy banks on either side
Came sweeping through the darkness, spinning still
The rapid line of motion, then at once
Have I, reclining back upon my heels,
Stopped short; yet still the solitary cliffs
Wheeled by me—even as if the earth had rolled
With visible motion her diurnal round!
Behind me did they stretch in solemn train,
Feebler and feebler, and I stood and watched
Till all was tranquil as a dreamless sleep.

Ye Presences of Nature in the sky
And on the earth! Ye Visions of the hills!
And Souls of lonely places! can I think
A vulgar hope was yours when ye employed
Such ministry, when ye through many a year
Haunting me thus among my boyish sports,
On caves and trees, upon the woods and hills,
Impressed upon all forms the characters
Of danger or desire; and thus did make
The surface of the universal earth
With triumph and delight, with hope and fear,
Work like a sea?
Not uselessly employed,
Might I pursue this theme through every change
Of exercise and play, to which the year
Did summon us in his delightful round.

We were a noisy crew; the sun in heaven
Beheld not vales more beautiful than ours;
Nor saw a band in happiness and joy
Richer, or worthier of the ground they trod.
I could record with no reluctant voice
The woods of autumn, and their hazel bowers
With milk-white clusters hung; the rod and line,
True symbol of hope's foolishness, whose strong
And unreproved enchantment led us on
By rocks and pools shut out from every star,
All the green summer, to forlorn cascades
Among the windings hid of mountain brooks.
—Unfading recollections! at this hour
The heart is almost mine with which I felt,
From some hill-top on sunny afternoons,
The paper kite high among fleecy clouds
Pull at her rein like an impetuous courser;
Or, from the meadows sent on gusty days,
Beheld her breast the wind, then suddenly
Dashed headlong, and rejected by the storm.

Ye lowly cottages wherein we dwelt,
A ministration of your own was yours;
Can I forget you, being as you were
So beautiful among the pleasant fields
In which ye stood? or can I here forget
The plain and seemly countenance with which
Ye dealt out your plain comforts? Yet had ye
Delights and exultations of your own.
Eager and never weary we pursued
Our home-amusements by the warm peat-fire
At evening, when with pencil, and smooth slate
In square divisions parceled out and all
With crosses and with cyphers scribbled o'er,
We schemed and puzzled, head opposed to head
In strife too humble to be named in verse:
Or round the naked table, snow-white deal,
Cherry or maple, sate in close array,
And to the combat, Loo or Whist, led on
A thick-ribbed army; not, as in the world,

Neglected and ungratefully thrown by
Even for the very service they had wrought,
But husbanded through many a long campaign.
Uncouth assemblage was it, where no few
Had changed their functions; some, plebeian cards
Which Fate, beyond the promise of their birth,
Had dignified, and called to represent
The persons of departed potentates.
Oh, with what echoes on the board they fell!
Ironic diamonds,—clubs, hearts, diamonds, spades,
A congregation piteously akin!
Cheap matter offered they to boyish wit,
Those sooty knaves, precipitated down
With scoffs and taunts, like Vulcan out of heaven:
The paramount ace, a moon in her eclipse,
Queens gleaming through their splendor's last decay,
And monarchs surly at the wrongs sustained
By royal visages. Meanwhile abroad
Incessant rain was falling, or the frost
Raged bitterly, with keen and silent tooth;
And, interrupting oft that eager game,
From under Esthwaite's splitting fields of ice
The pent-up air, struggling to free itself,
Gave out to meadow grounds and hills a loud
Protracted yelling, like the noise of wolves
Howling in troops along the Bothnic Main.

Nor, sedulous as I have been to trace
How Nature by extrinsic passion first
Peopled the mind with forms sublime or fair,
And made me love them, may I here omit
How other pleasures have been mine, and joys
Of subtler origin; how I have felt,
Not seldom even in that tempestuous time,
Those hallowed and pure motions of the sense
Which seem, in their simplicity, to own
An intellectual charm; that calm delight
Which, if I err not, surely must belong
To those first-born affinities that fit
Our new existence to existing things,

And, in our dawn of being, constitute
The bond of union between life and joy.

Yes, I remember when the changeful earth
And twice five summers on my mind had stamped
The faces of the moving year, even then
I held unconscious intercourse with beauty
Old as creation, drinking in a pure
Organic pleasure from the silver wreaths
Of curling mist, or from the level plain
Of waters colored by impending clouds. . . .

BOOK SECOND

SCHOOL-TIME—CONTINUED

Thus far, O Friend! have we, though leaving much
Unvisited, endeavored to retrace
The simple ways in which my childhood walked;
Those chiefly that first led me to the love
Of rivers, woods, and fields. The passion yet
Was in its birth, sustained as might befal
By nourishment that came unsought; for still
From week to week, from month to month, we lived
A round of tumult. Duly were our games
Prolonged in summer till the day-light failed:
No chair remained before the doors; the bench
And threshold steps were empty; fast asleep
The laborer, and the old man who had sate
A later lingerer; yet the revelry
Continued and the loud uproar: at last,
When all the ground was dark, and twinkling stars
Edged the black clouds, home and to bed we went,
Feverish with weary joints and beating minds.
Ah! is there one who ever has been young,
Nor needs a warning voice to tame the pride
Of intellect and virtue's self-esteem?
One is there, though the wisest and the best
Of all mankind, who covets not at times
Union that cannot be;—who would not give,
If so he might, to duty and to truth

The eagerness of infantine desire?
A tranquillizing spirit presses now
On my corporeal frame, so wide appears
The vacancy between me and those days
Which yet have such self-presence in my mind
That, musing on them, often do I seem
Two consciousnesses, conscious of myself
And of some other Being. A rude mass
Of native rock, left midway in the square
Of our small market village, was the goal
Or center of these sports; and when, returned
After long absence, thither I repaired,
Gone was the old gray stone, and in its place
A smart Assembly-room usurped the ground
That had been ours. There let the fiddle scream,
And be ye happy! Yet, my Friends! I know
That more than one of you will think with me
Of those soft starry nights, and that old Dame
From whom the stone was named, who there had sate,
And watched her table with its huckster's wares
Assiduous, through the length of sixty years.

We ran a boisterous course; the year span round
With giddy motion. But the time approached
That brought with it a regular desire
For calmer pleasures, when the winning forms
Of Nature were collaterally attached
To every scheme of holiday delight
And every boyish sport, less grateful else
And languidly pursued.
When summer came,
Our pastime was, on bright half-holidays,
To sweep along the plain of Windermere
With rival oars; and the selected bourne
Was now an Island musical with birds
That sang and ceased not; now a Sister Isle
Beneath the oaks' umbrageous covert, sown
With lilies of the valley like a field;
And now a third small Island, where survived
In solitude the ruins of a shrine

Once to Our Lady dedicate, and served
Daily with chaunted rites. In such a race
So ended, disappointment could be none,
Uneasiness, or pain, or jealousy:
We rested in the shade, all pleased alike,
Conquered and conqueror. Thus the pride of strength,
And the vain-glory of superior skill,
Were tempered; thus was gradually produced
A quiet independence of the heart;
And to my Friend who knows me I may add,
Fearless of blame, that hence for future days
Ensued a diffidence and modesty,
And I was taught to feel, perhaps too much
The self-sufficing power of Solitude.

Our daily meals were frugal, Sabine fare!
More than we wished we knew the blessing then
Of vigorous hunger—hence corporeal strength
Unsapped by delicate viands; for, exclude
A little weekly stipend, and we lived
Through three divisions of the quartered year
In penniless poverty. But now to school
From the half-yearly holidays returned,
We came with weightier purses that sufficed
To furnish treats more costly than the Dame
Of the old gray stone, from her scant board, supplied.
Hence rustic dinners on the cool green ground,
Or in the woods, or by a river side
Or shady fountains, while among the leaves
Soft airs were stirring, and the mid-day sun
Unfelt shone brightly round us in our joy.
Nor is my aim neglected if I tell
How sometimes, in the length of those half-years,
We from our funds drew largely;—proud to curb,
And eager to spur on, the galloping steed;
And with the courteous inn-keeper, whose stud
Supplied our want, we haply might employ
Sly subterfuge, if the adventure's bound
Were distant: some famed temple where of yore
The Druids worshiped, or the antique walls

Of that large Abbey, where within the Vale
Of Nightshade, to St. Mary's honor built,
Stands yet a moldering pile with fractured arch,
Belfry, and images, and living trees;
A holy scene!—Along the smooth green turf
Our horses grazed. To more than inland peace,
Left by the west wind sweeping overhead
From a tumultuous ocean, trees and towers
In that sequestered valley may be seen,
Both silent and both motionless alike;
Such the deep shelter that is there, and such
The safeguard for repose and quietness.

Our steeds remounted and the summons given,
With whip and spur we through the chauntry flew
In uncouth race, and left the cross-legged knight,
And the stone-abbot, and that single wren
Which one day sang so sweetly in the nave
Of the old church, that—though from recent showers
The earth was comfortless, and, touched by faint
Internal breezes, sobbings of the place
And respirations, from the roofless walls
The shuddering ivy dripped large drops—yet still
So sweetly 'mid the gloom the invisible bird
Sang to herself, that there I could have made
My dwelling-place, and lived forever there
To hear such music. Through the walls we flew
And down the valley, and, a circuit made
In wantonness of heart, through rough and smooth
We scampered homewards. Oh, ye rocks and streams,
And that still spirit shed from evening air!
Even in this joyous time I sometimes felt
Your presence, when with slackened step we breathed
Along the sides of the steep hills, or when
Lighted by gleams of moonlight from the sea
We beat with thundering hoofs the level sand.

Midway on long Winander's eastern shore,
Within the crescent of a pleasant bay,
A tavern stood; no homely-featured house,

Primeval like its neighboring cottages,
But, 'twas a splendid place, the door beset
With chaises, grooms, and liveries, and within
Decanters, glasses, and the blood-red wine.
In ancient times, and ere the Hall was built
On the large island, had this dwelling been
More worthy of a poet's love, a hut,
Proud of its own bright fire and sycamore shade.
But—though the rhymes were gone that once inscribed
The threshold, and large golden characters,
Spread o'er the spangled sign-board, had dislodged
The old Lion and usurped his place, in slight
And mockery of the rustic painter's hand—
Yet, to this hour, the spot to me is dear
With all its foolish pomp. The garden lay
Upon a slope surmounted by a plain
Of a small bowling-green; beneath us stood
A grove, with gleams of water through the trees
And over the tree-tops; nor did we want
Refreshment, strawberries and mellow cream.
There, while through half an afternoon we played
On the smooth platform, whether skill prevailed
Or happy blunder triumphed, bursts of glee
Made all the mountains ring. But, ere nightfall
When in our pinnace we returned at leisure
Over the shadowy lake, and to the beach
Of some small island steered our course with one,
The Minstrel of the Troop, and left him there,
And rowed off gently, while he blew his flute
Alone upon the rock—oh, then, the calm
And dead still water lay upon my mind
Even with a weight of pleasure, and the sky,
Never before so beautiful, sank down
Into my heart, and held me like a dream!
Thus were my sympathies enlarged, and thus
Daily the common range of visible things
Grew dear to me: already I began
To love the sun; a boy I loved the sun,
Not as I since have loved him, as a pledge
And surety of our earthly life, a light

Which we behold and feel we are alive;
Nor for his bounty to so many worlds—
But for this cause, that I had seen him lay
His beauty on the morning hills, had seen
The western mountain touch his setting orb,
In many a thoughtless hour, when, from excess
Of happiness, my blood appeared to flow
For its own pleasure, and I breathed with joy. . .

Nor seldom did I lift our cottage latch
Far earlier, ere one smoke-wreath had risen
From human dwelling, or the vernal thrush
Was audible; and sate among the woods
Alone upon some jutting eminence,
At the first gleam of dawn-light, when the Vale,
Yet slumbering, lay in utter solitude.
How shall I seek the origin? where find
Faith in the marvelous things which then I felt?
Oft in these moments such a holy calm
Would overspread my soul that bodily eyes
Were utterly forgotten, and what I saw
Appeared like something in myself, a dream,
A prospect in the mind.
'Twere long to tell
What spring and autumn, what the winter snows,
And what the summer shade, what day and night,
Evening and morning, sleep and waking, thought
From sources inexhaustible, poured forth
To feed the spirit of religious love
In which I walked with Nature. But let this
Be not forgotten, that I still retained
My first creative sensibility;
That by the regular action of the world
My soul was unsubdued. A plastic power
Abode with me; a forming hand, at times
Rebellious, acting in a devious mood;
A local spirit of his own, at war
With general tendency, but, for the most,
Subservient strictly to external things
With which it communed. An auxiliar light

Came from my mind, which on the setting sun
Bestowed new splendor; the melodious birds,
The fluttering breezes, fountains that run on
Murmuring so sweetly in themselves, obeyed
A like dominion, and the midnight storm
Grew darker in the presence of my eye:
Hence my obeisance, my devotion hence,
And hence my transport. . . .

I, at this time,
Saw blessings spread around me like a sea.
Thus while the days flew by, and years passed on,
From Nature and her overflowing soul,
I had received so much that all my thoughts
Were steeped in feeling; I was only then
Contented, when with bliss ineffable
I felt the sentiment of Being spread
O'er all that moves and all that seemeth still;
O'er all that, lost beyond the reach of thought
And human knowledge, to the human eye
Invisible, yet liveth to the heart;
O'er all that leaps and runs, and shouts and sings,
Or beats the gladsome air; o'er all that glides
Beneath the wave, yea, in the wave itself,
And mighty depth of waters. Wonder not
If high the transport, great the joy I felt,
Communing in this sort through earth and heaven
With every form of creature, as it looked
Towards the Uncreated with a countenance
Of adoration, with an eye of love.
One song they sang, and it was audible,
Most audible then when the fleshly ear,
O'ercome by humblest prelude of that strain,
Forgot her functions, and slept undisturbed.

If this be error, and another faith
Find easier access to the pious mind,
Yet were I grossly destitute of all
Those human sentiments that make this earth
So dear, if I should fail with grateful voice
To speak of you, ye mountains, and ye lakes

And sounding cataracts, ye mists and winds
That dwell among the hills where I was born.
If in my youth I have been pure in heart,
If, mingling with the world, I am content
With my own modest pleasures, and have lived
With God and Nature communing, removed
From little enmities and low desires,
The gift is yours; if in these times of fear,
This melancholy waste of hopes o'erthrown,
If, 'mid indifference and apathy,
And wicked exultation when good men
On every side fall off, we know not how,
To selfishness, disguised in gentle names
Of peace and quiet and domestic love,
Yet mingled not unwillingly with sneers
On visionary minds; if, in this time
Of dereliction and dismay, I yet
Despair not of our nature, but retain
A more than Roman confidence, a faith
That fails not, in all sorrow my support,
The blessing of my life; the gift is yours,
Ye winds and sounding cataracts! 'tis yours,
Ye mountains! thine, O Nature! Thou hast fed
My lofty speculations; and in thee,
For this uneasy heart of ours, I find
A never-failing principle of joy
And purest passion. . . .

BOOK THIRD

RESIDENCE AT CAMBRIDGE

It was a dreary morning when the wheels
Rolled over a wide plain o'erhung with clouds,
And nothing cheered our way till first we saw
The long-roofed chapel of King's College lift
Turrets and pinnacles in answering files,
Extended high above a dusky grove.

Advancing, we espied upon the road
A student clothed in gown and tasseled cap,

Striding along as if o'ertasked by Time,
Or covetous of exercise and air;
He passed—nor was I master of my eyes
Till he was left an arrow's flight behind.
As near and nearer to the spot we drew,
It seemed to suck us in with an eddy's force.
Onward we drove beneath the Castle; caught,
While crossing Magdalene Bridge, a glimpse of Cam;
And at the *Hoop* alighted, famous Inn.

My spirit was up, my thoughts were full of hope;
Some friends I had, acquaintances who there
Seemed friends, poor simple school-boys, now hung round
With honor and importance: in a world
Of welcome faces up and down I roved;
Questions, directions, warnings and advice,
Flowed in upon me, from all sides; fresh day
Of pride and pleasure! to myself I seemed
A man of business and expense, and went
From shop to shop about my own affairs,
To Tutor or to a Tailor, as befel,
From street to street with loose and careless mind.

I was the Dreamer, they the dream; I roamed
Delighted through the motley spectacle;
Gowns grave, or gaudy, doctors, students, streets,
Courts, cloisters, flocks of churches, gateways, towers:
Migration strange for a stripling of the hills,
A northern villager.
As if the change
Had waited on some Fairy's wand, at once
Behold me rich in monies, and attired
In splendid garb, with hose of silk, and hair
Powdered like rimy trees, when frost is keen.
My lordly dressing-gown, I pass it by,
With other signs of manhood that supplied
The lack of beard.—The weeks went roundly on,
With invitations, suppers, wine and fruit,
Smooth housekeeping within, and all without
Liberal, and suiting gentleman's array.

The Evangelist St. John my patron was:
Three Gothic courts are his, and in the first
Was my abiding-place, a nook obscure;
Right underneath, the College kitchens made
A humming sound, less tuneable than bees,
But hardly less industrious; with shrill notes
Of sharp command and scolding intermixed.
Near me hung Trinity's loquacious clock,
Who never let the quarters, night or day,
Slip by him unproclaimed, and told the hours
Twice over with a male and female voice.
Her pealing organ was my neighbor too:
And from my pillow, looking forth by light
Of moon or favoring stars, I could behold
The antechapel where the statue stood
Of Newton with his prism and silent face,
The marble index of a mind forever
Voyaging through strange seas of Thought, alone.

Of College labors, of the Lecturer's room
All studded round, as thick as chairs could stand,
With loyal students, faithful to their books,
Half-and-half idlers, hardy recusants,
And honest dunces—of important days,
Examinations, when the man was weighed
As in a balance! of excessive hopes,
Tremblings withal and commendable fears,
Small jealousies, and triumphs good or bad—
Let others that know more speak as they know.
Such glory was but little sought by me,
And little won. Yet from the first crude days
Of settling time in this untried abode,
I was disturbed at times by prudent thoughts,
Wishing to hope without a hope, some fears
About my future worldly maintenance,
And, more than all, a strangeness in the mind,
A feeling that I was not for that hour,
Nor for that place. But wherefore be cast down?
For (not to speak of Reason and her pure
Reflective acts to fix the moral law

Deep in the conscience, nor of Christian Hope,
Bowing her head before her sister Faith
As one far mightier), hither I had come,
Bear witness Truth, endowed with holy powers
And faculties, whether to work or feel.
Oft when the dazzling show no longer new
Had ceased to dazzle, ofttimes did I quit
My comrades, leave the crowd, buildings and groves,
And as I paced alone the level fields
Far from those lovely sights and sounds sublime
With which I had been conversant, the mind
Drooped not; but there into herself returning,
With prompt rebound seemed fresh as heretofore.
At least I more distinctly recognized
Her native instincts: let me dare to speak
A higher language, say that now I felt
What independent solaces were mine,
To mitigate the injurious sway of place
Or circumstance, how far soever changed
In youth, or to be changed in after years.
As if awakened, summoned, roused, constrained
I looked for universal things; perused
The common countenance of earth and sky:
Earth, nowhere unembellished by some trace
Of that first Paradise whence man was driven;
And sky, whose beauty and bounty are expressed
By the proud name she bears—the name of Heaven.
I called on both to teach me what they might;
Or turning the mind in upon herself
Pored, watched, expected, listened, spread my thoughts
And spread them with a wider creeping; felt
Incumbencies more awful, visitings
Of the Upholder of the tranquil soul,
That tolerates the indignities of Time,
And, from the center of Eternity
All finite motions overruling, lives
In glory immutable. But peace! enough
Here to record that I was mounting now
To such community with highest truth—
A track pursuing, not untrod before,

From strict analogies by thought supplied
Or consciousnesses not to be subdued.
To every natural form, rock, fruit or flower,
Even the loose stones that cover the high-way,
I gave a moral life: I saw them feel,
Or linked them to some feeling: the great mass
Lay bedded in a quickening soul, and all
That I beheld respired with inward meaning. . . .

Beside the pleasant Mill of Trompington
I laughed with Chaucer in the hawthorn shade;
Heard him, while birds were warbling, tell his tales
Of amorous passion. And that gentle Bard,
Chosen by the Muses for their Page of State—
Sweet Spenser, moving through his clouded heaven
With the moon's beauty and the moon's soft pace,
I called him Brother, Englishman, and Friend!
Yea, our blind Poet, who in his later day,
Stood almost single; uttering odious truth—
Darkness before, and danger's voice behind,
Soul awful—if the earth has ever lodged
An awful soul—I seemed to see him here
Familiarly, and in his scholar's dress
Bounding before me, yet a stripling youth—
A boy, no better, with his rosy cheeks
Angelical, keen eye, courageous look,
And conscious step of purity and pride.
Among the band of my compeers was one
Whom chance had stationed in the very room
Honored by Milton's name. O temperate Bard!
Be it confest that, for the first time, seated
Within thy innocent lodge and oratory,
One of a festive circle, I poured out
Libations, to thy memory drank, till pride
And gratitude grew dizzy in a brain
Never excited by the fumes of wine
Before that hour, or since. Then, forth I ran
From the assembly; through a length of streets,
Ran, ostrich-like to reach our chapel door
In not a desperate or opprobrious time,

Albeit long after the importunate bell
Had stopped, with wearisome Cassandra voice
No longer haunting the dark winter night.
Call back, O Friend! a moment to thy mind,
The place itself and fashion of the rites.
With careless ostentation shouldering up
My surplice, through the inferior throng I clove
Of the plain Burghers, who in audience stood
On the last skirts of their permitted ground,
Under the pealing organ. Empty thoughts!
I am ashamed of them: and that great Bard,
And thou, O Friend! who in thy ample mind
Hast placed me high above my best deserts,
Ye will forgive the weakness of that hour,
In some of its unworthy vanities,
Brother to many more.
In this mixed sort
The months passed on, remissly, not given up
To willful alienation from the right,
Or walks of open scandal, but in vague
And loose indifference, easy likings, aims
Of a low pitch—duty and zeal dismissed,
Yet Nature, or a happy course of things
Not doing in their stead the needful work.
The memory languidly revolved, the heart
Reposed in noontide rest, the inner pulse
Of contemplation almost failed to beat.
Such life might not inaptly be compared
To a floating island, an amphibious spot
Unsound, of spongy texture, yet withal
Not wanting a fair face of water weeds
And pleasant flowers. . . .

BOOK FOURTH

SUMMER VACATION

Bright was the summer's noon when quickening steps
Followed each other till a dreary moor
Was crossed, a bare ridge clomb, upon whose top
Standing alone, as from a rampart's edge,

I overlooked the bed of Windermere,
Like a vast river, stretching in the sun.
With exultation, at my feet I saw
Lake, islands, promontories, gleaming bays,
A universe of Nature's fairest forms
Proudly revealed with instantaneous burst,
Magnificent, and beautiful, and gay.
I bounded down the hill shouting amain
For the old Ferryman; to the shout the rocks
Replied, and when the Charon of the flood
Had stayed his oars, and touched the jutting pier,
I did not step into the well-known boat
Without a cordial greeting. Thence with speed
Up the familiar hill I took my way
Towards that sweet Valley [1] where I had been reared
'Twas but a short hour's walk, ere veering round
I saw the snow-white church upon her hill
Sit like a throned Lady, sending out
A gracious look all over her domain.
Yon azure smoke betrays the lurking town;
With eager footsteps I advance and reach
The cottage threshold where my journey closed.
Glad welcome had I, with some tears, perhaps,
From my old Dame, so kind and motherly,
While she perused me with a parent's pride.
The thoughts of gratitude shall fall like dew
Upon thy grave, good creature! While my heart
Can beat never will I forget thy name. . . .

Among the favorites whom it pleased me well
To see again, was one by ancient right
Our inmate, a rough terrier of the hills;
By birth and call of nature pre-ordained
To hunt the badger and unearth the fox
Among the impervious crags, but having been
From youth our own adopted, he had passed
Into a gentler service. And when first
The boyish spirit flagged, and day by day
Along my veins I kindled with the stir,

[1] Hawkshead.

The fermentation, and the vernal heat
Of poesy, affecting private shades
Like a sick Lover, then this dog was used
To watch me, an attendant and a friend,
Obsequious to my steps early and late,
Though often of such dilatory walk
Tired, and uneasy at the halts I made.
A hundred times when, roving high and low,
I have been harassed with the toil of verse,
Much pains and little progress, and at once
Some lovely Image in the song rose up
Full-formed, like Venus rising from the sea;
Then have I darted forwards to let loose
My hand upon his back with stormy joy,
Caressing him again and yet again.
And when at evening on the public way
I sauntered, like a river murmuring
And talking to itself when all things else
Are still, the creature trotted on before;
Such was his custom; but whene'er he met
A passenger approaching, he would turn
To give me timely notice, and straightway,
Grateful for that admonishment, I hushed
My voice, composed my gait, and, with the air
And mien of one whose thoughts are free, advanced
To give and take a greeting that might save
My name from piteous rumors, such as wait
On men suspected to be crazed in brain. . . .

A freshness also found I at this time
In human Life, the daily life of those
Whose occupations really I loved;
The peaceful scene oft filled me with surprise
Changed like a garden in the heat of spring
After an eight-days' absence. For (to omit
The things which were the same and yet appeared
Far otherwise) amid this rural solitude,
A narrow Vale where each was known to all,
'Twas not indifferent to a youthful mind
To mark some sheltering bower or sunny nook,

Where an old man had used to sit alone,
Now vacant; pale-faced babes whom I had left
In arms, now rosy prattlers at the feet
Of a pleased grandame tottering up and down;
And growing girls whose beauty, filched away
With all its pleasant promises, was gone
To deck some slighted playmate's homely cheek.

Yet in spite
Of pleasure won, and knowledge not withheld,
There was an inner falling off—I loved,
Loved deeply all that had been loved before,
More deeply even than ever: but a swarm
Of heady schemes jostling each other, gawds,
And feast and dance, and public revelry,
And sports and games (too grateful in themselves,
Yet in themselves less grateful, I believe,
Than as they were a badge glossy and fresh
Of manliness and freedom) all conspired
To lure my mind from firm habitual quest
Of feeding pleasures, to depress the zeal
And damp those yearnings which had once been mine—
A wild, unworldly-minded youth, given up
To his own eager thoughts. It would demand
Some skill, and longer time than may be spared,
To paint these vanities, and how they wrought
In haunts where they, till now, had been unknown.
It seemed the very garments that I wore
Preyed on my strength, and stopped the quiet stream
Of self-forgetfulness.
Yes, that heartless chase
Of trivial pleasures was a poor exchange
For books and nature at that early age.
'Tis true, some casual knowledge might be gained
Of character or life; but at that time,
Of manners put to school I took small note,
And all my deeper passions lay elsewhere.
Far better had it been to exalt the mind
By solitary study, to uphold
Intense desire through meditative peace;

And yet, for chastisement of these regrets,
The memory of one particular hour
Doth here rise up against me. 'Mid a throng
Of maids and youths, old men, and matrons staid,
A medley of all tempers, I had passed
The night in dancing, gayety, and mirth,
With din of instruments and shuffling feet,
And glancing forms, and tapers glittering,
And unaimed prattle flying up and down;
Spirits upon the stretch, and here and there
Slight shocks of young love-liking interspersed,
Whose transient pleasure mounted to the head,
And tingled through the veins. Ere we retired,
The cock had crowed, and now the eastern sky
Was kindling, not unseen, from humble copse
And open field, through which the pathway wound,
And homeward led my steps. Magnificent
The morning rose, in memorable pomp,
Glorious as ere I had beheld—in front,
The sea lay laughing at a distance; near,
The solid mountains shone, bright as the clouds,
Grain-tinctured, drenched in empyrean light;
And in the meadows and the lower grounds
Was all the sweetness of a common dawn—
Dews, vapors, and the melody of birds,
And laborers going forth to till the fields.
Ah! need I say, dear Friend! that to the brim
My heart was full; I made no vows, but vows
Were then made for me; bond unknown to me
Was given, that I should be, else sinning greatly,
A dedicated Spirit. On I walked
In thankful blessedness, which yet survives.

BOOK FIFTH

BOOKS

When Contemplation, like the night-calm felt
Through earth and sky, spreads widely, and sends deep
Into the soul its tranquillizing power,
Even then I sometimes grieve for thee, O Man,

Earth's paramount Creature! not so much for woes
That thou endurest; heavy though that weight be,
Cloud-like it mounts, or touched with light divine
Doth melt away; but for those palms achieved,
Through length of time, by patient exercise
Of study and hard thought; there, there, it is
That sadness finds its fuel. Hitherto,
In progress through this Verse, my mind hath looked
Upon the speaking face of earth and heaven
As her prime teacher, intercourse with man
Established by the sovereign Intellect,
Who through that bodily image hath diffused,
As might appear to the eye of fleeting time,
A deathless spirit. Thou also, man! hast wrought,
For commerce of thy nature with herself,
Things that aspire to unconquerable life;
And yet we feel—we cannot choose but feel—
That they must perish. . . .

One day, when from my lips a like complaint
Had fallen in presence of a studious friend,
He with a smile made answer, that in truth
'Twas going far to seek disquietude:
But on the front of his reproof confessed
That he himself had oftentimes given way
To kindred hauntings. Whereupon I told,
That once in the stillness of a summer's noon,
While I was seated in a rocky cave
By the sea-side, perusing, so it chanced,
The famous history of the errant knight
Recorded by Cervantes, these same thoughts
Beset me, and to height unusual rose,
While listlessly I sate, and, having closed
The book, had turned my eyes toward the wide sea.
On poetry and geometric truth,
And their high privilege of lasting life,
From all internal injury exempt,
I mused; upon these chiefly: and at length,
My senses yielding to the sultry air,
Sleep seized me, and I passed into a dream.

I saw before me stretched a boundless plain
Of sandy wilderness, all black and void,
And as I looked around, distress and fear
Came creeping over me, when at my side,
Close at my side, an uncouth shape appeared
Upon a dromedary, mounted high.
He seemed an Arab of the Bedouin tribes:
A lance he bore, and underneath one arm
A stone, and in the opposite hand a shell
Of a surpassing brightness. At the sight
Much I rejoiced, not doubting but a guide
Was present, one who with unerring skill
Would through the desert lead me; and while yet
I looked and looked, self-questioned what this freight
Which the new comer carried through the waste
Could mean, the Arab told me that the stone
(To give it in the language of the dream)
Was "Euclid's Elements;" and "This," said he,
"Is something of more worth;" and at the word
Stretched forth the shell, so beautiful in shape,
In color so resplendent, with command
That I should hold it to my ear. I did so,
And heard that instant in an unknown tongue,
Which yet I understood, articulate sounds,
A loud prophetic blast of harmony;
An Ode, in passion uttered, which foretold
Destruction to the children of the earth
By deluge, now at hand. No sooner ceased
The song, than the Arab with calm look declared
That all would come to pass of which the voice
Had given forewarning, and that he himself
Was going then to bury those two books:
The one that held acquaintance with the stars.
And wedded soul to soul in purest bond
Of reason, undisturbed by space or time
The other that was a god, yea many gods,
Had voices more than all the winds, with power
To exhilarate the spirit, and to soothe,
Through every clime, the heart of human kind.
While this was uttering, strange as it may seem,

I wondered not, although I plainly saw
The one to be a stone, the other a shell;
Nor doubted once but that they both were books,
Having a perfect faith in all that passed.
Far stronger, now, grew the desire I felt
To cleave unto this man; but when I prayed
To share his enterprise, he hurried on
Reckless of me: I followed, not unseen,
For oftentimes he cast a backward look,
Grasping his twofold treasure.—Lance in rest,
He rode, I keeping pace with him; and now
He, to my fancy, had become the knight
Whose tale Cervantes tells; yet not the knight,
But was an Arab of the desert too;
Of these was neither, and was both at once.
His countenance, meanwhile, grew more disturbed;
And, looking backwards when he looked, mine eyes
Saw, over half the wilderness diffused,
A bed of glittering light: I asked the cause:
"It is," said he, "the waters of the deep
Gathering upon us;" quickening then the pace
Of the unwieldy creature he bestrode,
He left me: I called after him aloud;
He heeded not; but, with his twofold charge
Still in his grasp, before me, full in view,
Went hurrying o'er the illimitable waste,
With the fleet waters of a drowning world
In chase of him; whereat I waked in terror,
And saw the sea before me, and the book,
In which I had been reading, at my side.

Full often, taking from the world of sleep
This Arab phantom, which I thus beheld,
This semi-Quixote, I to him have given
A substance, fancied him a living man,
A gentle dweller in the desert, crazed
By love and feeling, and internal thought
Protracted among endless solitudes;
Have shaped him wandering upon this quest!
Nor have I pitied him; but rather felt

Reverence was due to a being thus employed;
And thought that, in the blind and awful lair
Of such a madness, reason did lie couched.
Enow there are on earth to take in charge
Their wives, their children, and their virgin loves,
Or whatsoever else the heart holds dear;
Enow to stir for these; yea, will I say,
Contemplating in soberness the approach
Of an event so dire, by signs in earth
Or heaven made manifest, that I could share
That maniac's fond anxiety, and go
Upon like errand. Oftentimes at least
Me hath such strong entrancement overcome,
When I have held a volume in my hand,
Poor earthly casket of immortal verse,
Shakespeare, or Milton, laborers divine.

There was a Boy: ye knew him well, ye cliffs
And islands of Winander!—many a time
At evening, when the earliest stars began
To move along the edges of the hills,
Rising or setting, would he stand alone
Beneath the trees or by the glimmering lake,
And there, with fingers interwoven, both hands
Pressed closely palm to palm, and to his mouth
Uplifted, he, as through an instrument,
Blew mimic hootings to the silent owls,
That they might answer him; and they would shout
Across the watery vale, and shout again,
Responsive to his call, with quivering peals.
And long halloos and screams, and echoes loud,
Redoubled and redoubled, concourse wild
Of jocund din; and, when a lengthened pause
Of silence came and baffled his best skill,
Then sometimes, in that silence while he hung
Listening, a gentle shock of mild surprise
Has carried far into his heart the voice
Of mountain torrents; or the visible scene
Would enter unawares into his mind,
With all its solemn imagery, its rocks,

Its woods, and that uncertain heaven, received
Into the bosom of the steady lake.

This Boy was taken from his mates, and died
In childhood, ere he was full twelve years old.
Fair is the spot, most beautiful the vale
Where he was born; the grassy churchyard hangs
Upon a slope above the village school,
And through that churchyard when my way has led
On summer evenings, I believe that there
A long half hour together I have stood
Mute, looking at the grave in which he lies!
Even now appears before the mind's clear eye
That self-same village church; I see her sit
(The thronèd Lady whom erewhile we hailed)
On her green hill, forgetful of this Boy
Who slumbers at her feet,—forgetful, too,
Of all her silent neighborhood of graves,
And listening only to the gladsome sounds
That, from the rural school ascending, play
Beneath her and about her. May she long
Behold a race of young ones like to those
With whom I herded!—(easily, indeed,
We might have fed upon a fatter soil
Of arts and letters—but be that forgiven)—
A race of real children; not too wise,
Too learned, or too good; but wanton, fresh,
And bandied up and down by love and hate;
Not unresentful where self-justified;
Fierce, moody, patient, venturous, modest, shy;
Mad at their sports like withered leaves in winds;
Though doing wrong and suffering, and full oft
Bending beneath our life's mysterious weight
Of pain, and doubt, and fear, yet yielding not
In happiness to the happiest upon earth.
Simplicity in habit, truth in speech,
Be these the daily strengtheners of their minds;
May books and Nature be their early joy!
And knowledge, rightly honored with that name—
Knowledge not purchased by the loss of power!

Well do I call to mind the very week
When I was first intrusted to the care
Of that sweet Valley; when its paths, its shores,
And brooks were like a dream of novelty
To my half-infant thoughts; that very week,
While I was roving up and down alone,
Seeking I knew not what, I chanced to cross
One of those open fields, which, shaped like ears,
Make green peninsulas on Esthwaite's Lake:
Twilight was coming on, yet through the gloom
Appeared distinctly on the opposite shore
A heap of garments, as if left by one
Who might have there been bathing. Long I watched,
But no one owned them; meanwhile the calm lake
Grew dark with all the shadows on its breast,
And, now and then, a fish up-leaping snapped
The breathless stillness. The succeeding day,
Those unclaimed garments telling a plain tale
Drew to the spot an anxious crowd; some looked
In passive expectation from the shore,
While from a boat others hung o'er the deep,
Sounding with grappling irons and long poles.
At last, the dead man, 'mid that beauteous scene
Of trees and hills and water, bolt upright
Rose, with his ghastly face, a specter shape
Of terror; yet no soul-debasing fear,
Young as I was, a child not nine years old,
Possessed me, for my inner eye had seen
Such sights before, among the shining streams
Of faëry land, the forest of romance.
Their spirit hallowed the sad spectacle
With decoration of ideal grace;
A dignity, a smoothness, like the works
Of Grecian art, and purest poesy.

A precious treasure had I long possessed,
A little yellow, canvas-covered book,
A slender abstract of the Arabian tales;
And, from companions in a new abode,
When first I learnt that this dear prize of mine

Was but a block hewn from a mighty quarry—
That there were four large volumes, laden all
With kindred matter, 'twas to me, in truth,
A promise scarcely earthly. Instantly,
With one not richer than myself, I made
A covenant that each should lay aside
The moneys he possessed, and hoard up more,
Till our joint savings had amassed enough
To make this book our own. Through several months,
In spite of all temptation, we preserved
Religiously that vow; but firmness failed,
Nor were we ever masters of our wish.

And when thereafter to my father's house
The holidays returned me, there to find
That golden store of books which I had left,
What joy was mine! How often in the course
Of those glad respites, though a soft west wind
Ruffled the waters to the angler's wish,
For a whole day together, have I lain
Down by thy side, O Derwent! murmuring stream,
On the hot stones, and in the glaring sun,
And there have read, devouring as I read,
Defrauding the day's glory, desperate!
Till with a sudden bound of smart reproach,
Such as an idler deals with in his shame,
I to the sport betook myself again.

BOOK SIXTH

CAMBRIDGE AND THE ALPS

The leaves were fading when to Esthwaite's banks
And the simplicities of cottage life
I bade farewell; and, one among the youth
Who, summoned by that season, reunite
As scattered birds troop to the fowler's lure,
Went back to Granta's cloisters, not so prompt
Or eager, though as gay and undepressed
In mind, as when I thence had taken flight
A few short months before. I turned my face

Without repining from the coves and heights
Clothed in the sunshine of the withering fern;
Quitted, not loth, the mild magnificence
Of calmer lakes and louder streams; and you,
Frank-hearted maids of rocky Cumberland,
You and your not unwelcome days of mirth,
Relinquished, and your nights of revelry,
And in my own unlovely cell sate down
In lightsome mood—such privilege has youth
That cannot take long leave of pleasant thoughts.

In summer, making quest for works of art,
Or scenes renowned for beauty, I explored
That streamlet whose blue current works its way
Between romantic Dovedale's spiry rocks;
Pried into Yorkshire dales, or hidden tracts
Of my own native region, and was blest
Between these sundry wanderings with a joy
Above all joys, that seemed another morn
Risen on mid noon; blest with the presence, Friend!
Of that sole Sister, her who hath been long
Dear to thee also, thy true friend and mine,
Now, after separation desolate,
Restored to me—such absence that she seemed
A gift then first bestowed. The varied banks
Of Emont, hitherto unnamed in song,
And that monastic castle, 'mid tall trees,
Low standing by the margin of the stream,
A mansion visited (as fame reports)
By Sidney, where, in sight of our Helvellyn,
Or stormy Cross-fell, snatches he might pen
Of his Arcadia, by fraternal love
Inspired;—that river and those moldering towers
Have seen us side by side, when, having clomb
The darksome windings of a broken stair,
And crept along a ridge of fractured wall,
Not without trembling, we in safety looked
Forth, through some Gothic window's open space,
And gathered with one mind a rich reward
From the far-stretching landscape, by the light

Of morning beautified, or purple eve;
Or, not less pleased, lay on some turret's head,
Catching from tufts of grass and hare-bell flowers
Their faintest whisper to the passing breeze,
Given out while mid-day heat oppressed the plains.

Another maid there was, who also shed
A gladness o'er that season, then to me,
By her exulting outside look of youth
And placid under-countenance, first endeared;
That other spirit, Coleridge! who is now
So near to us, that meek confiding heart,
So reverenced by us both. O'er paths and fields
In all that neighborhood, through narrow lanes
Of eglantine, and through the shady woods,
And o'er the Border Beacon, and the waste
Of naked pools, and common crags that lay
Exposed on the bare fell, were scattered love,
The spirit of pleasure, and youth's golden gleam.

When the third summer freed us from restraint,
A youthful friend, he too a mountaineer,
Not slow to share my wishes, took his staff,
And sallying forth, we journeyed side by side,
Bound to the distant Alps. A hardy slight
Did this unprecedented course imply
Of college studies and their set rewards;
Nor had, in truth, the scheme been formed by me
Without uneasy forethought of the pain,
The censures, and ill-omening of those
To whom my worldly interests were dear.
But Nature then was sovereign in my mind,
And mighty forms, seizing a youthful fancy,
Had given a charter to irregular hopes.
In any age of uneventful calm
Among the nations, surely would my heart
Have been possessed by similar desire;
But Europe at that time was thrilled with joy,
France standing on the top of golden hours,
And human nature seeming born again.

Lightly equipped, and but a few brief looks
Cast on the white cliffs of our native shore
From the receding vessel's deck, we chanced
To land at Calais on the very eve
Of that great federal day; and there we saw,
In a mean city, and among a few,
How bright a face is worn when joy of one
Is joy for tens of millions. Southward thence
We held our way, direct through hamlets, towns,
Gaudy with reliques of that festival,
Flowers left to wither on triumphal arcs,
And window-garlands. On the public roads,
And, once, three days successively, through paths
By which our toilsome journey was abridged,
Among sequestered villages we walked
And found benevolence and blessedness
Spread like a fragrance everywhere, when spring
Hath left no corner of the land untouched;
Where elms for many and many a league in files
With their thin umbrage, on the stately roads
Of that great kingdom, rustled o'er our heads,
Forever near us as we paced along:
How sweet at such a time, with such delight
On every side, in prime of youthful strength,
To feed a Poet's tender melancholy
And fond conceit of sadness, with the sound
Of undulations varying as might please
The wind that swayed them; once, and more than once,
Unhoused beneath the evening star we saw
Dances of liberty, and in late hours
Of darkness, dances in the open air
Deftly prolonged, though gray-haired lookers on
Might waste their breath in chiding.
Under hills—
The vine-clad hills and slopes of Burgundy,
Upon the bosom of the gentle Saone
We glided forward with the flowing stream.
Swift Rhone! thou wert the *wings* on which we cut
A winding passage with majestic ease
Between thy lofty rocks. Enchanting show

Those woods and farms, and orchards did present,
And single cottages and lurking towns,
Reach after reach, succession without end
Of deep and stately vales! A lonely pair
Of strangers, till day closed, we sailed along
Clustered together with a merry crowd
Of those emancipated, a blithe host
Of travelers, chiefly delegates, returning
From the great spousals newly solemnized
At their chief city, in the sight of Heaven.
Like bees they swarmed, gaudy and gay as bees;
Some vapored in the unruliness of joy,
And with their swords flourished as if to fight
The saucy air. In this proud company
We landed—took with them our evening meal,
Guests welcome almost as the angels were
To Abraham of old. The supper done,
With flowing cups elate and happy thoughts
We rose at signal given, and formed a ring
And, hand in hand, danced round and round the board;
All hearts were open, every tongue was loud
With amity and glee; we bore a name
Honored in France, the name of Englishmen,
And hospitably did they give us hail,
As their forerunners in a glorious course;
And round and round the board we danced again.
With these blithe friends our voyage we renewed
At early dawn. The monastery bells
Made a sweet jingling in our youthful ears;
The rapid river flowing without noise,
And each uprising or receding spire
Spake with a sense of peace, at intervals
Touching the heart amid the boisterous crew
By whom we were encompassed. . . .

'Tis not my present purpose to retrace
That variegated journey step by step.
A march it was of military speed,
And Earth did change her images and forms
Before us, fast as clouds are changed in heaven.

Day after day, up early and down late,
From hill to vale we dropped, from vale to hill
Mounted—from province on to province swept,
Keen hunters in a chase of fourteen weeks,
Eager as birds of prey, or as a ship
Upon the stretch, when winds are blowing fair:
Sweet coverts did we cross of pastoral life,
Enticing valleys, greeted them and left
Too soon, while yet the very flash and gleam
Of salutation were not passed away.
Oh! sorrow for the youth who could have seen
Unchastened, unsubdued, unawed, unraised
To patriarchal dignity of mind,
And pure simplicity of wish and will,
Those sanctified abodes of peaceful man,
Pleased (though to hardship born, and compassed round
With danger, varying as the seasons change),
Pleased with his daily task, or, if not pleased,
Contented, from the moment that the dawn
(Ah! surely not without attendant gleams
Of soul-illumination) calls him forth
To industry, by glistenings flung on rocks,
Whose evening shadows lead him to repose.

Well might a stranger look with bounding heart
Down on a green recess, the first I saw
Of those deep haunts, an aboriginal vale,
Quiet and lorded over and possessed
By naked huts, wood-built, and sown like tents
Or Indian cabins over the fresh lawns
And by the river side.
That very day
From a bare ridge we also first beheld
Unveiled the summit of Mont Blanc, and grieved
To have a soulless image on the eye
That had usurped upon a living thought
That never more could be. The wondrous Vale
Of Chamouny stretched far below, and soon
With its dumb cataracts and streams of ice,
A motionless array of mighty waves,

Five rivers broad and vast, made rich amends,
And reconciled us to realities;
There small birds warble from the leafy trees,
The eagle soars high in the element,
There doth the reaper bind the yellow sheaf,
The maiden spread the haycock in the sun,
While Winter like a well-tamed lion walks,
Descending from the mountain to make sport
Among the cottages by beds of flowers.

Whate'er in this wide circuit we beheld,
Or heard, was fitted to our unripe state
Of intellect and heart. With such a book
Before our eyes, we could not choose but read
Lessons of genuine brotherhood, the plain
And universal reason of mankind,
The truths of young and old. Nor, side by side
Pacing, two social pilgrims, or alone
Each with his humor, could we fail to abound
In dreams and fictions, pensively composed:
Dejection taken up for pleasure's sake,
And gilded sympathies, the willow wreath,
And sober posies of funereal flowers,
Gathered among those solitudes sublime
From formal gardens of the lady Sorrow,
Did sweeten many a meditative hour.

Oh, most belovèd Friend! a glorious time,
A happy time that was; triumphant looks
Were then the common language of all eyes;
As if awaked from sleep, the Nations hailed
Their great expectancy: the fife of war
Was then a spirit-stirring sound indeed,
A blackbird's whistle in a budding grove.
We left the Swiss exulting in the fate
Of their near neighbors; and, when shortening fast
Our pilgrimage, nor distant far from home,
We crossed the Brabant armies on the fret
For battle in the cause of Liberty.
A stripling, scarcely of the household then

Of social life, I looked upon these things
As from a distance; heard, and saw, and felt,
Was touched, but with no intimate concern;
I seemed to move along them, as a bird
Moves through the air, or as a fish pursues
Its sport, or feeds in its proper element;
I wanted not that joy, I did not need
Such help; the ever-living universe,
Turn where I might, was opening out its glories,
And the independent spirit of pure youth
Called forth, at every season, new delights
Spread round my steps like sunshine o'er green fields.

BOOK SEVENTH

RESIDENCE IN LONDON

Six changeful years have vanished since I first
Poured out (saluted by that quickening breeze
Which met me issuing from the City's [1] walls)
A glad preamble to this Verse: I sang
Aloud, with fervor irresistible
Of short-lived transport, like a torrent bursting,
From a black thunder-cloud, down Scafell's side
To rush and disappear. But soon broke forth
(So willed the Muse) a less impetuous stream,
That flowed a while with unabating strength,
Then stopped for years; not audible again
Before last primrose-time. . . .

Returned from that excursion, soon I bade
Farewell forever to the sheltered seats
Of gownèd students, quitted hall and bower,
And every comfort of that privileged ground,
Well pleased to pitch a vagrant tent among
The unfenced regions of society.

Yet, undetermined to what course of life
I should adhere, and seeming to possess
A little space of intermediate time

[1] The City of Goslar, in Lower Saxony.

At full command, to London first I turned,
In no disturbance of excessive hope,
By personal ambition unenslaved,
Frugal as there was need, and, though self-willed,
From dangerous passions free. Three years had flown
Since I had felt in heart and soul the shock
Of the huge town's first presence, and had paced
Her endless streets, a transient visitant:
Now, fixed amid that concourse of mankind
Where Pleasure whirls about incessantly,
And life and labor seem but one, I filled
An idler's place; an idler well content
To have a house (what matter for a home?)
That owned him; living cheerfully abroad
With unchecked fancy ever on the stir,
And all my young affections out of doors. . . .

BOOK EIGHTH

RETROSPECT—LOVE OF NATURE LEADING TO LOVE OF MAN

What sounds are those, Helvellyn, that are heard
Up to thy summit, through the depth of air
Ascending, as if distance had the power
To make the sounds more audible? What crowd
Covers, or sprinkles o'er, yon village green?
Crowd seems it, solitary hill! to thee,
Though but a little family of men,
Shepherds and tillers of the ground—betimes
Assembled with their children and their wives,
And here and there a stranger interspersed.
They hold a rustic fair—a festival,
Such as, on this side now, and now on that,
Repeated through his tributary vales,
Helvellyn, in the silence of his rest,
Sees annually, if clouds towards either ocean
Blown from their favorite resting-place, or mists
Dissolved, have left him an unshrouded head.
Delightful day it is for all who dwell
In this secluded glen, and eagerly
They give it welcome. Long ere heat of noon,

From byre or field the kine were brought; the sheep
Are penned in cotes; the chaffering is begun.
The heifer lows, uneasy at the voice
Of a new master; bleat the flocks aloud.
Booths are there none; a stall or two is here;
A lame man or a blind, the one to beg,
The other to make music; hither, too,
From far, with basket, slung upon her arm,
Of hawker's wares—books, pictures, combs, and pins—
Some aged woman finds her way again,
Year after year, a punctual visitant!
There also stands a speech-maker by rote,
Pulling the strings of his boxed raree-show;
And in the lapse of many years may come
Prouder itinerant, mountebank, or he
Whose wonders in a covered wain lie hid.
But one there is, the loveliest of them all,
Some sweet lass of the valley, looking out
For gains, and who that sees her would not buy?
Fruits of her father's orchard are her wares,
And with the ruddy produce, she walks round
Among the crowd, half pleased with, half ashamed
Of her new office, blushing restlessly.
The children now are rich, for the old to-day
Are generous as the young; and, if content
With looking on, some ancient wedded pair
Sit in the shade together, while they gaze,
"A cheerful smile unbends the wrinkled brow,
The days departed start again to life,
And all the scenes of childhood reappear,
Faint, but more tranquil, like the changing sun
To him who slept at noon and wakes at eve."[1]
Thus gayety and cheerfulness prevail,
Spreading from young to old, from old to young,
And no one seems to want his share.—Immense
Is the recess, the circumambient world
Magnificent, by which they are embraced
They move about upon the soft green turf:

[1] These lines are from a descriptive poem—"Malvern Hills"—by one of Mr. Wordsworth's oldest friends, Mr. Joseph Cottle.

How little they, they and their doings, seem,
And all that they can further or obstruct!
Through utter weakness pitiably dear,
As tender infants are: and yet how great!
For all things serve them: them the morning light
Loves, as it glistens on the silent rocks;
And them the silent rocks, which now from high
Look down upon them; the reposing clouds;
The wild brooks prattling from invisible haunts;
And old Helvellyn, conscious of the stir
Which animates this day their calm abode

With deep devotion, Nature, did I feel,
In that enormous City's turbulent world
Of men and things, what benefit I owed
To thee, and those domains of rural peace,
Where to the sense of beauty first my heart
Was opened; tract more exquisitely fair
Than that famed paradise of ten thousand trees,
Or Gehol's matchless gardens, for delight
Of the Tartarian dynasty composed
(Beyond that mighty wall, not fabulous,
China's stupendous mound) by patient toil
Of myriads and boon nature's lavish help;
There, in a clime from widest empire chosen,
Fulfilling (could enchantment have done more?)
A sumptuous dream of flowery lawns, with domes
Of pleasure sprinkled over, shady dells
For eastern monasteries, sunny mounts
With temples crested, bridges, gondolas,
Rocks, dens, and groves of foliage taught to melt
Into each other their obsequious hues,
Vanished and vanishing in subtle chase,
Too fine to be pursued; or standing forth
In no discordant opposition, strong
And gorgeous as the colors side by side
Bedded among rich plumes of tropic birds;
And mountains over all, embracing all;
And all the landscape, endlessly enriched
With waters running, falling, or asleep.

But lovelier far than this, the paradise
Where I was reared; in Nature's primitive gifts
Favored no less, and more to every sense
Delicious, seeing that the sun and sky,
The elements, and seasons as they change,
Do find a worthy fellow-laborer there—
Man free, man working for himself, with choice
Of time, and place, and object; by his wants,
His comforts, native occupations, cares,
Cheerfully led to individual ends
Or social, and still followed by a train
Unwooed, unthought-of even—simplicity,
And beauty, and inevitable grace. . . .

BOOK NINTH

RESIDENCE IN FRANCE

Even as a river,—partly (it might seem)
Yielding to old remembrances, and swayed
In part by fear to shape a way direct,
That would engulf him soon in the ravenous sea—
Turns, and will measure back his course, far back,
Seeking the very regions which he crossed
In his first outset; so have we, my Friend!
Turned and returned with intricate delay.
Or as a traveler, who has gained the brow
Of some aerial Down, while there he halts
For breathing-time, is tempted to review
The region left behind him; and, if aught
Deserving notice have escaped regard,
Or been regarded with too careless eye,
Strives, from that height, with one and yet one more
Last look, to make the best amends he may:
So have we lingered. Now we start afresh
With courage, and new hope risen on our toil.
Fair greetings to this shapeless eagerness,
Whene'er it comes! needful in work so long,
Thrice needful to the argument which now
Awaits us! Oh, how much unlike the past!

Free as a colt at pasture on the hill,
I ranged at large, through London's wide domain,
Month after month. Obscurely did I live,
Not seeking frequent intercourse with men
By literature, or elegance, or rank,
Distinguished. Scarcely was a year thus spent
Ere I forsook the crowded solitude,
With less regret for its luxurious pomp,
And all the nicely-guarded shows of art,
Than for the humble book-stalls in the streets,
Exposed to eye and hand where'er I turned.

France lured me forth; the realm that I had crossed
So lately, journeying toward the snow-clad Alps.
But now, relinquishing the scrip and staff,
And all enjoyment which the summer sun
Sheds round the steps of those who meet the day
With motion constant as his own, I went
Prepared to sojourn in a pleasant town,
Washed by the current of the stately Loire.

Through Paris lay my readiest course, and there
Sojourning a few days, I visited
In haste each spot of old or recent fame,
The latter chiefly; from the field of Mars
Down to the suburbs of St. Antony,
And from Mont Martre southward to the Don
Of Geneviève. In both her clamorous Halls,
The National Synod and the Jacobins,
I saw the Revolutionary Power
Toss like a ship at anchor, rocked by storms;
The Arcades I traversed in the Palace huge
Of Orleans; coasted round and round the line
Of Tavern, Brothel, Gaming-house, and Shop
Great rendezvous of worst and best, the walk
Of all who had a purpose, or had not;
I stared and listened, with a stranger's ears,
To Hawkers and Haranguers, hubbub wild!
And hissing Factionists with ardent eyes,
In knots, or pairs, or single. Not a look

Hope takes, or Doubt or Fear is forced to wear,
But seemed there present; and I scanned them all,
Watched every gesture uncontrollable,
Of anger, and vexation, and despite,
All side by side, and struggling face to face,
With gayety and dissolute idleness.

Where silent zephyrs sported with the dust
Of the Bastile, I sate in the open sun,
And from the rubbish gathered up a stone,
And pocketed the relic, in the guise
Of an enthusiast; yet, in honest truth,
I looked for something that I could not find,
Affecting more emotion than I felt;
For 'tis most certain that these various sights,
However potent their first shock, with me
Appeared to recompense the traveler's pains
Less than the painted Magdalene of Le Brun,
A beauty exquisitely wrought, with hair
Disheveled, gleaming eyes, and rueful cheek
Pale and bedropped with overflowing tears.

But hence to my more permanent abode
I hasten; there, by novelties in speech,
Domestic manners, customs, gestures, looks,
And all the attire of ordinary life,
Attention was engrossed; and, thus amused,
I stood 'mid those concussions, unconcerned,
Tranquil almost, and careless as a flower
Glassed in a green-house, or a parlor shrub
That spreads its leaves in unmolested peace,
While every bush and tree, the country through,
Is shaking to the roots; indifference this
Which may seem strange: but I was unprepared
With needful knowledge, had abruptly passed
Into a theater whose stage was filled
And busy with an action far advanced.
Like others, I had skimmed, and sometimes read
With care, the master pamphlets of the day;
Nor wanted such half-insight as grew wild
Upon that meager soil, helped out by talk

And public news; but having never seen
A chronicle that might suffice to show
Whence the main organs of the public power
Had sprung, their transmigrations, when and how
Accomplished, giving thus unto events
A form and body; all things were to me
Loose and disjointed, and the affections left
Without a vital interest. At that time,
Moreover, the first storm was overblown,
And the strong hand of outward violence
Locked up in quiet. For myself, I fear
Now in connection with so great a theme
To speak (as I must be compelled to do)
Of one so unimportant; night by night
Did I frequent the formal haunts of men,
Whom, in the city, privilege of birth
Sequestered from the rest, societies
Polished in arts, and in punctilio versed;
Whence, and from deeper causes, all discourse
Of good and evil of the time was shunned
With scrupulous care; but these restrictions soon
Proved tedious, and I gradually withdrew
Into a noisier world, and thus ere long
Became a patriot; and my heart was all
Given to the people, and my love was theirs

A band of military Officers,
Then stationed in the city, were the chief
Of my associates: some of these wore swords
That had been seasoned in the wars, and all
Were men well-born; the chivalry of France.
In age and temper differing, they had yet
One spirit ruling in each heart; alike
(Save only one, hereafter to be named)
Were bent upon undoing what was done:
This was their rest and only hope; therewith
No fear had they of bad becoming worse,
For worst to them was come; nor would have stirred,
Or deemed it worth a moment's thought to stir,
In anything, save only as the act

Looked thitherward. One, reckoning by years,
Was in the prime of manhood, and erewhile
He had sate lord in many tender hearts;
Though heedless of such honors now, and changed:
His temper was quite mastered by the times,
And they had blighted him, had eaten away
The beauty of his person, doing wrong
Alike to body and to mind: his port,
Which once had been erect and open, now
Was stooping and contracted, and a face,
Endowed by Nature with her fairest gifts
Of symmetry and light and bloom, expressed,
As much as any that was ever seen,
A ravage out of season, made by thoughts
Unhealthy and vexatious. With the hour
That from the press of Paris duly brought
Its freight of public news, the fever came,
A punctual visitant, to shake this man,
Disarmed his voice and fanned his yellow cheek
Into a thousand colors; while he read,
Or mused, his sword was haunted by his touch
Continually, like an uneasy place
In his own body. 'Twas in truth an hour
Of universal ferment; mildest men
Were agitated; and commotions, strife
Of passion and opinion, filled the walls
Of peaceful houses with unquiet sounds.
The soil of common life was, at that time,
Too hot to tread upon. Oft said I then,
And not then only, "What a mockery this
Of history, the past and that to come!
Now do I feel how all men are deceived,
Reading of nations and their works, in faith,
Faith given to vanity and emptiness;
Oh! laughter for the page that would reflect
To future times the face of what now is!"
The land all swarmed with passion, like a plain
Devoured by locusts,—Carra, Gorsas,—add
A hundred other names, forgotten now,
Nor to be heard of more; yet, they were powers,

Like earthquakes, shocks repeated day by day,
And felt through every nook of town and field.

Such was the state of things. Meanwhile the chief
Of my associates stood prepared for flight
To augment the band of emigrants in arms
Upon the borders of the Rhine, and leagued
With foreign foes mustered for instant war.
This was their undisguised intent, and they
Were waiting with the whole of their desires
The moment to depart.
An Englishman,
Born in a land whose very name appeared
To license some unruliness of mind;
A stranger, with youth's further privilege,
And the indulgence that a half-learnt speech
Wins from the courteous; I, who had been else
Shunned and not tolerated, freely lived
With these defenders of the Crown, and talked,
And heard their notions; nor did they disdain
The wish to bring me over to their cause.

But though untaught by thinking or by books
To reason well of polity or law,
And nice distinctions, then on every tongue,
Of natural rights and civil; and to acts
Of nations and their passing interests,
(If with unworldly ends and aims compared)
Almost indifferent, even the historian's tale
Prizing but little otherwise than I prized
Tales of the poets, as it made the heart
Beat high, and filled the fancy with fair forms,
Old heroes and their sufferings and their deeds;
Yet in the regal scepter, and the pomp
Of orders and degrees, I nothing found
Then, or had ever, even in crudest youth,
That dazzled me, but rather what I mourned
And ill could brook, beholding that the best
Ruled not, and feeling that they ought to rule.

BOOK TENTH

RESIDENCE IN FRANCE—CONTINUED

It was a beautiful and silent day
That overspread the countenance of earth,
Then fading with unusual quietness,—
A day as beautiful as e'er was given
To soothe regret, though deepening what it soothed,
When by the gliding Loire I paused, and cast
Upon his rich domains, vineyard and tilth,
Green meadow-ground, and many-colored woods,
Again, and yet again, a farewell look;
Then from the quiet of that scene passed on,
Bound to the fierce Metropolis. From his throne
The King had fallen, and that invading host—
Presumptuous cloud, on whose black front was written
The tender mercies of the dismal wind
That bore it—on the plains of Liberty
Had burst innocuous. Say in bolder words,
They—who had come elate as eastern hunters
Banded beneath the Great Mogul, when he
Erewhile went forth from Agra or Lahore,
Rajahs and Omrahs in his train, intent
To drive their prey enclosed within a ring
Wide as a province, but, the signal given,
Before the point of the life-threatening spear
Narrowing itself by moments—they, rash men,
Had seen the anticipated quarry turned
Into avengers, from whose wrath they fled
In terror. Disappointment and dismay
Remained for all whose fancies had run wild
With evil expectations; confidence
And perfect triumph for the better cause.

The State, as if to stamp the final seal
On her security, and to the world
Show what she was, a high and fearless soul,
Exulting in defiance, or heart-stung
By sharp resentment, or belike to taunt
With spiteful gratitude the baffled League,

That had stirred up her slackening faculties
To a new transition, when the King was crushed,
Spared not the empty throne, and in proud haste
Assumed the body and venerable name
Of a Republic. Lamentable crimes,
'Tis true, had gone before this hour, dire work
Of massacre, in which the senseless sword
Was prayed to as a judge; but these were past,
Earth free from them for ever, as was thought,—
Ephemeral monsters, to be seen but once!
Things that could only show themselves and die.

Cheered with this hope, to Paris I returned,
And ranged, with ardor heretofore unfelt,
The spacious city, and in progress passed
The prison where the unhappy Monarch lay,
Associate with his children and his wife
In bondage; and the palace, lately stormed
With roar of cannon by a furious host.
I crossed the square (an empty area then!)
Of the Carrousel, where so late had lain
The dead, upon the dying heaped, and gazed
On this and other spots, as doth a man
Upon a volume whose contents he knows
Are memorable, but from him locked up,
Being written in a tongue he cannot read,
So that he questions the mute leaves with pain.
And half upbraids their silence. But that night
I felt most deeply in what world I was,
What ground I trod on, and what air I breathed.
High was my room and lonely, near the roof
Of a large mansion or hotel, a lodge
That would have pleased me in more quiet times;
Nor was it wholly without pleasure then.
With unextinguished taper I kept watch,
Reading at intervals; the fear gone by
Pressed on me almost like a fear to come.
I thought of those September massacres,
Divided from me by one little month,
Saw them and touched: the rest was conjured up

From tragic fictions or true history,
Remembrances and dim admonishments. . . .

BOOK ELEVENTH

FRANCE—CONCLUDED

From that time forth, Authority in France
Put on a milder face; Terror had ceased,
Yet everything was wanting that might give
Courage to them who looked for good by light
Of rational Experience, for the shoots
And hopeful blossoms of a second spring:
Yet, in me, confidence was unimpaired;
The Senate's language, and the public acts
And measures of the Government, though both
Weak, and of heartless omen, had not power
To daunt me; in the People was my trust:
And, in the virtues which mine eyes had seen,
I knew that wound external could not take
Life from the young Republic; that new foes
Would only follow, in the path of shame,
Their brethren, and her triumphs be in the end
Great, universal, irresistible.
This intuition led me to confound
One victory with another, higher far,—
Triumphs of unambitious peace at home,
And noiseless fortitude. Beholding still
Resistance strong as heretofore, I thought
That what was in degree the same was likewise
The same in quality,—that, as the worse
Of the two spirits then at strife remained
Untired, the better, surely, would preserve
The heart that first had roused him. Youth maintains,
In all conditions of society,
Communion more direct and intimate
With Nature,—hence, ofttimes, with reason too—
Than age or manhood, even. To Nature, then,
Power had reverted: habit, custom, law,
Had left an interregnum's open space
For *her* to move about in, uncontrolled.

Hence could I see how Babel-like their task,
Who, by the recent deluge stupefied,
With their whole souls went culling from the day
Its petty promises, to build a tower
For their own safety; laughed with my compeers
At gravest heads, by enmity to France
Distempered, till they found, in every blast
Forced from the street-disturbing newsman's horn,
For her great cause record or prophecy
Of utter ruin. How might we believe
That wisdom could, in any shape, come near
Men clinging to delusions so insane?
And thus, experience proving that no few
Of our opinions had been just, we took
Like credit to ourselves where less was due,
And thought that other notions were as sound,
Yea, could not but be right, because we saw
That foolish men opposed them.
To a strain
More animated I might here give way,
And tell, since juvenile errors are my theme,
What in those days, through Britain, was performed
To turn *all* judgments out of their right course·
But this is passion over-near ourselves,
Reality too close and too intense,
And intermixed with something, in my mind;
Of scorn and condemnation personal,
That would profane the sanctity of verse.
Our Shepherds, this say merely, at that time
Acted, or seemed at least to act, like men
Thirsting to make the guardian crook of law
A tool of murder; they who ruled the State,
Though with such awful proof before their eyes
That he, who would sow death, reaps death, or worse
And can reap nothing better, child-like longed
To imitate, not wise enough to avoid;
Or left (by mere timidity betrayed)
The plain straight road, for one no better chosen
Than if their wish had been to undermine
Justice, and make an end of Liberty.

But from these bitter truths I must return
To my own history. It hath been told
That I was led to take an eager part
In arguments of civil polity,
Abruptly, and indeed before my time:
I had approached, like other youths, the shield
Of human nature from the golden side,
And would have fought, even to the death, to attest
The quality of the metal which I saw.
What there is best in individual man,
Of wise in passion, and sublime in power,
Benevolent in small societies,
And great in large ones, I had oft revolved,
Felt deeply, but not thoroughly understood
By reason: nay, far from it; they were yet,
As cause was given me afterwards to learn,
Not proof against the injuries of the day;
Lodged only at the sanctuary's door,
Not safe within its bosom. Thus prepared,
And with such general insight into evil,
And of the bounds which sever it from good,
As books and common intercourse with life
Must needs have given—to the inexperienced mind,
When the world travels in a beaten road,
Guide faithful as is needed—I began
To meditate with ardor on the rule
And management of nations; what it is
And ought to be; and strove to learn how far
Their power or weakness, wealth or poverty,
Their happiness or misery, depends
Upon their laws, and fashion of the State.

O pleasant exercise of hope and joy!
For mighty were the auxiliars which then stood
Upon our side, us who were strong in love!
Bliss was it in that dawn to be alive,
But to be young was very Heaven! O times,
In which the meager, stale, forbidding ways
Of custom, law, and statute, took at once
The attraction of a country in romance!

When Reason seemed the most to assert her rights
When most intent of making of herself
A prime enchantress—to assist the work
Which then was going forward in her name!
Not favored spots alone, but the whole Earth,
The beauty wore of promise—that which sets
(As at some moments might not be unfelt
Among the bowers of Paradise itself)
The budding rose above the rose full blown
What temper at the prospect did not wake
To happiness unthought of? The inert
Were roused, and lively natures rapt away!
They who had fed their childhood upon dreams,
The play-fellows of fancy, who had made
All powers of swiftness, subtility, and strength
Their ministers,—who in lordly wise had stirred
Among the grandest objects of the sense,
And dealt with whatsoever they found there
As if they had within some lurking right
To wield it;—they, too, who of gentle mood
Had watched all gentle motions, and to these
Had fitted their own thoughts, schemers more mild,
And in the region of their peaceful selves:—
Now was it that *both* found, the meek and lofty
Did both find helpers to their hearts' desire,
And stuff at hand, plastic as they could wish,—
Were called upon to exercise their skill,
Not in Utopia,—subterranean fields,—
Or some secreted island, Heaven knows where!
But in the very world, which is the world
Of all of us,—the place where, in the end,
We find our happiness, or not at all!

Why should I not confess that Earth was then
To me what an inheritance, new-fallen,
Seems, when the first time visited, to one
Who thither comes to find in it his home!
He walks about and looks upon the spot
With cordial transport, molds it and remolds,

And is half pleased with things that are amiss,
'Twill be such joy to see them disappear.

An active partisan, I thus convoked
From every object pleasant circumstance
To suit my ends; I moved among mankind
With genial feelings still predominant;
When erring, erring on the better part,
And in the kinder spirit; placable,
Indulgent, as not uninformed that men
See as they have been taught—Antiquity
Gives rights to error; and aware, no less,
That throwing off oppression must be work
As well of License as of Liberty;
And above all—for this was more than all—
Not caring if the wind did now and then
Blow keen upon an eminence that gave
Prospects so large into futurity;
In brief, a child of Nature, as at first,
Diffusing only those affections wider
That from the cradle had grown up with me,
And losing, in no other way than light
Is lost in light, the weak in the more strong.

In the main outline, such it might be said
Was my condition, till with open war
Britain opposed the liberties of France.
This threw me first out of the pale of love;
Soured and corrupted, upwards to the source,
My sentiments; was not, as hitherto,
A swallowing up of lesser things in great,
But change of them into their contraries;
And thus a way was opened for mistakes
And false conclusions, in degree as gross,
In kind more dangerous. What had been a pride
Was now a shame; my likings and my loves
Ran in new channels, leaving old ones dry;
And hence a blow that, in maturer age,
Would but have touched the judgment, struck more deep
Into sensations near the heart: meantime,

As from the first, wild theories were afloat,
To whose pretensions, sedulously urged,
I had but lent a careless ear, assured
That time was ready to set all things right,
And that the multitude, so long oppressed,
Would be oppressed no more.

But now, become oppressors in their turn,
Frenchmen had changed a war of self-defense
For one of conquest, losing sight of all
Which they had struggled for: up mounted now,
Openly in the eye of earth and heaven,
The scale of liberty. I read her doom,
With anger vexed, with disappointment sore,
But not dismayed, nor taking to the shame
Of a false prophet. While resentment rose
Striving to hide, what nought could heal, the wounds
Of mortified presumption, I adhered
More firmly to old tenets, and, to prove
Their temper, strained them more; and thus, in heat
Of contest, did opinions every day
Grow into consequence, till round my mind
They clung, as if they were its life, nay more,
The very being of the immortal soul. . . .

So I fared,
Dragging all precepts, judgments, maxims, creeds,
Like culprits to the bar; calling the mind,
Suspiciously, to establish in plain day
Her titles and her honors; now believing,
Now disbelieving; endlessly perplexed
With impulse, motive, right and wrong, the ground
Of obligation, what the rule and whence
The sanction; till, demanding formal *proof*,
And seeking it in everything, I lost
All feeling of conviction, and, in fine,
Sick, wearied out with contrarieties,
Yielded up moral questions in despair.

This was the crisis of that strong disease,
This the soul's last and lowest ebb; I drooped,

Deeming our blessèd reason of least use
Where wanted most: "The lordly attributes
Of will and choice," I bitterly exclaimed,
"What are they but a mockery of a Being
Who hath in no concerns of his a test
Of good and evil; knows not what to fear
Or hope for, what to covet or to shun;
And who, if those could be discerned, would yet
Be little profited, would see, and ask
Where is the obligation to enforce?
And, to acknowledge law rebellious, still,
As selfish passion urged, would act amiss;
The dupe of folly, or the slave of crime."

Depressed, bewildered thus, I did not walk,
With scoffers, seeking light and gay revenge
From indiscriminate laughter, nor sate down
In reconcilement with an utter waste
Of intellect; such sloth I could not brook,
(Too well I loved, in that my spring of life,
Pains-taking thoughts, and truth, their dear reward)
But turned to abstract science, and there sought
Work for the reasoning faculty enthroned
Where the disturbances of space and time—
Whether in matters various, properties
Inherent, or from human will and power
Derived—find no admission. Then it was—
Thanks to the bounteous Giver of all good!—
That the beloved Sister in whose sight
Those days were passed, now speaking in a voice
Of sudden admonition—like a brook
That did but *cross* a lonely road, and now
Is seen, heard, felt, and caught at every turn,
Companion never lost through many a league—
Maintained for me a saving intercourse
With my true self; for, though bedimmed and changed
Much, as it seemed, I was no further changed
Than as a clouded and a waning moon:
She whispered still that brightness would return,
She, in the midst of all, preserved me still

A Poet, made me seek beneath that name,
And that alone, my office upon earth;
And, lastly, as hereafter will be shown,
If willing audience fail not, Nature's self,
By all varieties of human love
Assisted, led me back through opening day
To those sweet counsels between head and heart
Whence grew that genuine knowledge, fraught with peace,
Which, through the later sinkings of this cause
Hath still upheld me, and upholds me now
In the catastrophe (for so they dream,
And nothing less), when, finally to close
And seal up all the gains of France, a Pope
Is summoned in, to crown an Emperor—
This last opprobrium, when we see a people,
That once looked up in faith, as if to Heaven
For manna, take a lesson from the dog
Returning to his vomit; when the sun
That rose in splendor, was alive, and moved
In exultation with a living pomp
Of clouds—his glory's natural retinue—
Hath dropped all functions by the gods bestowed,
And, turned into a gewgaw, a machine,
Sets like an Opera phantom.
Thus, O Friend!
Through times of honor and through times of shame
Descending, have I faithfully retraced
The perturbations of a youthful mind
Under a long-lived storm of great events. . . .

Child of my parents! Sister of my soul!
Thanks in sincerest verse have been elsewhere
Poured out for all the early tenderness
Which I from thee imbibed: and 'tis most true
That later seasons owed to thee no less;
For, spite of thy sweet influence and the touch
Of kindred hands that opened out the springs
Of genial thought in childhood, and in spite
Of all that unassisted I had marked

In life or nature of those charms minute
That win their way into the heart by stealth,
Still, to the very going-out of youth,
I too exclusively esteemed *that* love,
And sought *that* beauty, which, as Milton sings,
Hath terror in it. Thou didst soften down
This over-sternness; but for thee, dear Friend!
My soul, too reckless of mild grace, had stood
In her original self too confident,
Retained too long a countenance severe;
A rock with torrents roaring, with the clouds
Familiar, and a favorite of the stars:
But thou didst plant its crevices with flowers,
Hang it with shrubs that twinkle in the breeze,
And teach the little birds to build their nests
And warble in its chambers. At a time
When Nature, destined to remain so long
Foremost in my affections, had fallen back
Into a second place, pleased to become
A handmaid to a nobler than herself,
When every day brought with it some new sense
Of exquisite regard for common things,
And all the earth was budding with these gifts
Of more refined humanity, thy breath,
Dear Sister! was a kind of gentler spring
That went before my steps. Thereafter came
One whom with thee friendship had early paired;
She came, no more a phantom to adorn
A moment, but an inmate of the heart,
And yet a spirit, there for me enshrined
To penetrate the lofty and the low;
Even as one essence of pervading light
Shines, in the brightest of ten thousand stars,
And the meek worm that feeds her lonely lamp
Couched in the dewy grass.
With such a theme,
Coleridge! with this my argument, of thee
Shall I be silent? O capacious Soul!
Placed on this earth to love and understand,
And from thy presence shed the light of love,

Shall I be mute, ere thou be spoken of?
Thy kindred influence to my heart of hearts
Did also find its way. Thus fear relaxed
Her over-weening grasp; thus thoughts and things
In the self-haunting spirit learned to take
More rational proportions; mystery,
The incumbent mystery of sense and soul,
Of life and death, time and eternity,
Admitted more habitually a mild
Interposition—a serene delight
In closelier gathering cares, such as become
A human creature, howsoe'er endowed,
Poet, or destined for a humbler name;
And so the deep enthusiastic joy,
The rapture of the hallelujah sent
From all that breathes and is, was chastened, stemmed
And balanced by pathetic truth, by trust
In hopeful reason, leaning on the stay
Of Providence; and in reverence for duty,
Here, if need be, struggling with storms, and there
Strewing in peace life's humblest ground with herbs,
At every season green, sweet at all hours.

And now, O Friend! this history is brought
To its appointed close: the discipline
And consummation of a Poet's mind,
In everything that stood most prominent,
Have faithfully been pictured; we have reached
The time (our guiding object from the first)
When we may, not presumptuously, I hope,
Suppose my powers so far confirmed, and such
My knowledge, as to make me capable
Of building up a Work that shall endure.

Whether to me shall be allotted life,
And, with life, power to accomplish aught of worth,
That will be deemed no insufficient plea
For having given the story of myself,
Is all uncertain: but, beloved Friend!
When, looking back, thou seest, in clearer view

Than any liveliest sight of yesterday,
That summer, under whose indulgent skies
Upon smooth Quantock's airy ridge we roved
Unchecked, or loitered 'mid her sylvan combs,
Thou in bewitching words, with happy heart,
Didst chaunt the vision of that Ancient Man,
The bright-eyed Mariner, and rueful woes
Didst utter of the Lady Christabel;
And I, associate with such labor, steeped
In soft forgetfulness the livelong hours,
Murmuring of him who, joyous hap, was found,
After the perils of his moonlight ride,
Near the loud waterfall; or her who sate
In misery near the miserable Thorn;
When thou dost to that summer turn thy thoughts,
And hast before thee all which then we were,
To thee, in memory of that happiness,
It will be known, by thee at least, my Friend!
Felt, that the history of a Poet's mind
Is labor not unworthy of regard:
To thee the work shall justify itself.

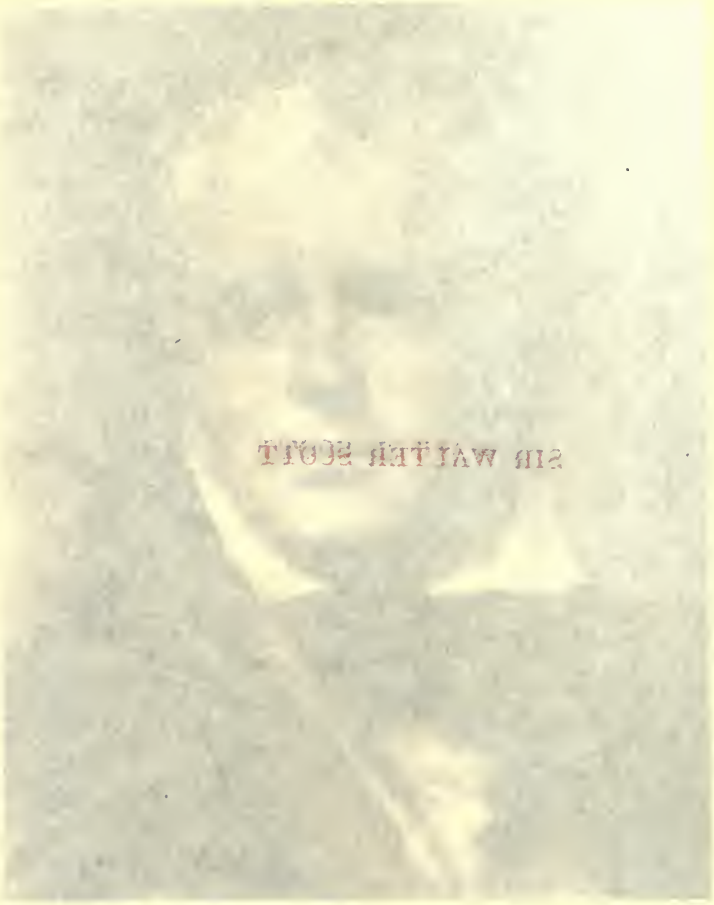
The last and later portions of this gift
Have been prepared, not with the buoyant spirits
That were our daily portion when we first
Together wantoned in wild Poesy,
But, under pressure of a private grief,
Keen and enduring, which the mind and heart,
That in this meditative history
Have been laid open, needs must make me feel
More deeply, yet enable me to bear
More firmly; and a comfort now hath risen
From hope that thou art near, and will be soon
Restored to us in renovated health;
When, after the first mingling of our tears,
'Mong other consolations, we may draw
Some pleasure from this offering of my love.

Oh! yet a few short years of useful life,
And all will be complete, thy race be run,

Thy monument of glory will be raised;
Then, though (too weak to tread the ways of truth)
This age fall back to old idolatry,
Though men return to servitude as fast
As the tide ebbs, to ignominy and shame
By nations sink together, we shall still
Find solace—knowing what we have learnt to know,
Rich in true happiness if allowed to be
Faithful alike in forwarding a day
Of firmer trust, joint laborers in the work
(Should Providence such grace to us vouchsafe)
Of their deliverance, surely yet to come.
Prophets of Nature, we to them will speak
A lasting inspiration, sanctified
By reason, blest by faith: what we have loved,
Others will love, and we will teach them how;
Instruct them how the mind of man becomes
A thousand times more beautiful than the earth
On which he dwells, above this frame of things
(Which, 'mid all revolution in the hopes
And fears of men, doth still remain unchanged)
In beauty exalted, as it is itself
Of quality and fabric more divine.

END OF "THE PRELUDE"

SIR WALTER SCOTT


SIR WALTER SCOTT

SIR WALTER SCOTT

THE "PEOPLE'S POET" AND SCOTLAND'S FOREMOST STORY-TELLER

1771-1832

(INTRODUCTORY NOTE)

When we turn to biography rather than autobiography, probably the most remarkable and valuable work of that class, next to Boswell's Johnson, is the life of Scott written by his son-in-law, J. G. Lockhart. This most attractive biography opens with an autobiographical section furnished by Scott himself. It is incomplete, dealing only with the author's early life, but this lack is partly made up by the fact that Scott went over the sketch a second time, in 1826, and added copious notes supplying his later viewpoint on events.

Scott's autobiography is interesting for its simplicity and gay humor, and also for giving us yet another sidelight on the noble nature of the man. Few human beings have ever existed so admirable in every way, so splendidly and gallantly heroic as Sir Walter Scott. He has often been compared to the heroes of his own novels; and every student of human nature has delighted to linger with this magnificent specimen of our race. He was certainly the most loved man of his day, and this wide public appreciation was given him even more as a man than as a writer. He first won celebrity as a critic, an antiquarian, and a poet. His "story-telling" poems were in fact the means of first attracting the masses of people to reading poetry, and so securing for it an extensive sale. Then, in 1814, Scott began to win his even greater reputation as a novelist.

SCOTT'S UNFINISHED AUTOBIOGRAPHY

Ashestiel, April 26th, 1808.

THE present age has discovered a desire, or rather a rage, for literary anecdote and private history, that may be well permitted to alarm one who has engaged in a certain degree the attention of the public. That I have had more than my own share of popularity, my contemporaries will be as ready to

admit as I am to confess that its measure has exceeded not only my hopes, but my merits, and even wishes. I may be therefore permitted, without an extraordinary degree of vanity, to take the precaution of recording a few leading circumstances (they do not merit the name of events) of a very quiet and uniform life—that, should my literary reputation survive my temporal existence, the public may know from good authority all that they are entitled to know of an individual who has contributed to their amusement.

From the lives of some poets a most important moral lesson may doubtless be derived, and few sermons can be read with so much profit as the Memoirs of Burns, of Chatterton, or of Savage. Were I conscious of anything peculiar in my own moral character which could render such development necessary or useful, I would as readily consent to it as I would bequeath my body to dissection, if the operation could tend to point out the nature and the means of curing any peculiar malady. But as my habits of thinking and acting, as well as my rank in society, were fixed long before I had attained, or even pretended to any poetical reputation,[1] and as it produced, when acquired, no remarkable change upon either, it is hardly to be expected that much information can be derived from minutely investigating frailties, follies, or vices, not very different in number or degree from those of other men in my situation. As I have not been blessed with the talents of Burns or Chatterton, I have been happily exempted from the influence of their violent passions, exasperated by the struggle of feelings which rose up against the unjust decrees of fortune. Yet, although I cannot tell of difficulties vanquished, and distance of rank annihilated by the strength of genius, those who

[1] I do not mean to say that my success in literature has not led me to mix familiarly in society much above my birth and original pretensions, since I have been readily received in the first circles in Britain. But there is a certain intuitive knowledge of the world, to which most well-educated Scotchmen are early trained, that prevents them from being much dazzled by this species of elevation. A man who to good nature adds the general rudiments of good breeding, provided he rest contented with a simple and unaffected manner of behaving and expressing himself, will never be ridiculous in the best society, and, so far as his talents and information permit, may be an agreeable part of the company. I have therefore never felt much elevated, nor did I experience any violent change in situation, by the passport which my poetical character afforded me into higher company than my birth warranted.—1826.

shall hereafter read this little Memoir may find in it some hints to be improved, for the regulation of their own minds, or the training those of others.

Every Scotchman has a pedigree. It is a national prerogative, as unalienable as his pride and his poverty. My birth was neither distinguished nor sordid. According to the prejudices of my country, it was esteemed *gentle,* as I was connected, though remotely, with ancient families both by my father's and mother's side. My father's grandfather was Walter Scott, well known in Teviotdale by the surname of *Beardie.* He was the second son of Walter Scott, first Laird of Raeburn, who was third son of Sir William Scott, and the grandson of Walter Scott, commonly called in tradition *Auld Watt* of Harden. I am therefore lineally descended from that ancient chieftain, whose name I have made to ring in many a ditty, and from his fair dame, the Flower of Yarrow—no bad genealogy for a Border minstrel.

Beardie, my great-grandfather aforesaid, derived his cognomen from a venerable beard, which he wore unblemished by razor or scissors, in token of his regret for the banished dynasty of Stuart. It would have been well that his zeal had stopped there. But he took arms, and intrigued in their cause, until he lost all he had in the world, and, as I have heard, run a narrow risk of being hanged, had it not been for the interference of Anne, Duchess of Buccleuch and Monmouth. Beardie's elder brother, William Scott of Raeburn, my great-granduncle, was killed about the age of twenty-one, in a duel with Pringle of Crichton, grandfather of the present Mark Pringle of Clifton. They fought with swords, as was the fashion of the time, in a field near Selkirk, called from the catastrophe the *Raeburn Meadowspot.* Pringle fled from Scotland to Spain, and was long a captive and slave in Barbary. *Beardie* became, of course, *Tutor of Raeburn,* as the old Scottish phrase called him—that is, guardian to his infant nephew, father of the present Walter Scott of Raeburn. He also managed the estates of Makerstoun, being nearly related to that family by his mother, Isobel MacDougal. I suppose he had some allowance for his care in either case, and subsisted upon that and the fortune which he had by his wife, a Miss Campbell of Silvercraigs, in the west, through which connection my

father used to *call cousin,* as they say, with the Campbells of Blythswood. Beardie was a man of some learning, and a friend of Dr. Pitcairn, to whom his politics probably made him acceptable. They had a Tory or Jacobite club in Edinburgh, in which the conversation is said to have been maintained in Latin.

He left three sons. The eldest, Walter, had a family, of which any that now remain have been long settled in America:—the male heirs are long since extinct. The third was William, father of James Scott, well known in India as one of the original settlers of Prince of Wales island. The second, Robert Scott, was my grandfather. He was originally bred to the sea; but, being shipwrecked near Dundee in his trial-voyage, he took such a sincere dislike to that element, that he could not be persuaded to a second attempt. This occasioned a quarrel between him and his father, who left him to shift for himself. Robert was one of those active spirits to whom this was no misfortune. He turned Whig upon the spot, and fairly abjured his father's politics, and his learned poverty. His chief and relative, Mr. Scott of Harden, gave him a lease of the farm of Sandy-Knowe, comprehending the rocks in the center of which Smailholm or Sandy-Knowe Tower is situated. He took for his shepherd an old man called Hogg, who willingly lent him, out of respect to his family, his savings, about £30, to stock the new farm.

With this sum, which it seems was at the time sufficient for the purpose, the master and servant set off to purchase a stock of sheep at Whitsun-Tryste, a fair held on a hill near Wooler in Northumberland. The old shepherd went carefully from drove to drove, till he found a *hirsel* likely to answer their purpose, and then returned to tell his master to come up and conclude the bargain. But what was his surprise to see him galloping a mettled hunter about the race-course, and to find he had expended the whole stock in this extraordinary purchase!—Moses's bargain of green spectacles did not strike more dismay into the Vicar of Wakefield's family, than my grandfather's rashness into the poor old shepherd. The thing, however, was irretrievable, and they returned without the sheep. In the course of a few days, however, my grandfather, who was one of the best horsemen of his time, attended

John Scott of Harden's hounds on this same horse, and displayed him to such advantage that he sold him for double the original price. The farm was now stocked in earnest; and the rest of my grandfather's career was that of successful industry. He was one of the first who were active in the cattle trade, afterwards carried to such extent between the Highlands of Scotland and the leading counties in England, and by his droving transactions acquired a considerable sum of money. He was a man of middle stature, extremely active, quick, keen, and fiery in his temper, stubbornly honest, and so distinguished for his skill in country matters, that he was the general referee in all points of dispute which occurred in the neighborhood. His birth being admitted as *gentle,* gave him access to the best society in the county, and his dexterity in country sports, particularly hunting, made him an acceptable companion in the field as well as at the table.[2]

Robert Scott of Sandy-Knowe married, in 1728, Barbara Haliburton, daughter of Thomas Haliburton of Newmains, an ancient and respectable family in Berwickshire. Among other patrimonial possessions, they enjoyed the part of Dryburgh, now the property of the Earl of Buchan, comprehending the ruins of the Abbey. My granduncle, Robert Haliburton, having no male heirs, this estate, as well as the representation of the family, would have devolved upon my father, and indeed Old Newmains had settled it upon him; but this was prevented by the misfortunes of my granduncle, a weak silly man, who engaged in trade, for which he had neither stock nor talents, and became bankrupt. The ancient patrimony was sold for a trifle (about £3000), and my father, who might have purchased it with ease, was dissuaded by my grandfather, who at that time believed a more advantageous purchase might have been made of some lands which Raeburn thought of selling. And thus we have nothing left of Dryburgh, although my father's maternal inheritance, but the right of stretching our bones where mine may perhaps be laid ere any eye but my own glances over these pages.

Walter Scott, my father, was born in 1729, and educated

[2] The present Lord Haddington, and other gentlemen conversant with the south country, remember my grandfather well. He was a fine alert figure, and wore a jockey cap over his gray hair.—1826.

to the profession of a Writer to the Signet. He was the eldest of a large family, several of whom I shall have occasion to mention with a tribute of sincere gratitude. My father was a singular instance of a man rising to eminence in a profession for which nature had in some degree unfitted him. He had indeed a turn for labor, and a pleasure in analyzing the abstruse feudal doctrines connected with conveyancing, which would probably have rendered him unrivaled in the line of a special pleader, had there been such a profession in Scotland; but in the actual business of the profession which he embraced, in that sharp and intuitive perception which is necessary in driving bargains for himself and others, in availing himself of the wants, necessities, caprices, and follies of some, and guarding against the knavery and malice of others, Uncle Toby himself could not have conducted himself with more simplicity than my father. Most attorneys have been suspected, more or less justly, of making their own fortune at the expense of their clients—my father's fate was to vindicate his calling from the stain in one instance, for in many cases his clients contrived to ease him of considerable sums. Many worshipful and be-knighted names occur to my memory, who did him the honor to run in his debt to the amount of thousands, and to pay him with a lawsuit, or a commission of bankruptcy, as the case happened. But they are gone to a different accounting, and it would be ungenerous to visit their disgrace upon their descendants.

My father was wont also to give openings, to those who were pleased to take them, to pick a quarrel with him. He had a zeal for his clients which was almost ludicrous: far from coldly discharging the duties of his employment towards them, he thought for them, felt for their honor as for his own, and rather risked disobliging them than neglecting anything to which he conceived their duty bound them. If there was an old mother or aunt to be maintained, he was, I am afraid, too apt to administer to their necessities from what the young heir had destined exclusively to his pleasures. This ready discharge of obligations which the Civilians tell us are only natural and not legal, did not, I fear, recommend him to his employers. Yet his practice was, at one period of his life, very extensive. He understood his business theoretically,

and was early introduced to it by a partnership with George Chalmers, Writer to the Signet, under whom he had served his apprenticeship.

His person and face were uncommonly handsome, with an expression of sweetness of temper, which was not fallacious; his manners were rather formal, but full of genuine kindness, especially when exercising the duties of hospitality. His general habits were not only temperate, but severely abstemious; but upon a festival occasion, there were few whom a moderate glass of wine exhilarated to such a lively degree. His religion, in which he was devoutly sincere, was Calvinism of the strictest kind, and his favorite study related to church history. I suspect the good old man was often engaged with Knox and Spottiswoode's folios, when, immured in his solitary room, he was supposed to be immersed in professional researches. In his political principles he was a steady friend to freedom, with a bias, however, to the monarchical part of our constitution, which he considered as peculiarly exposed to danger during the later years of his life. He had much of ancient Scottish prejudice respecting the forms of marriages, funerals, christenings, and so forth, and was always vexed at any neglect of etiquette upon such occasions. As his education had not been upon an enlarged plan, it could not be expected that he should be an enlightened scholar, but he had not passed through a busy life without observation; and his remarks upon times and manners often exhibited strong traits of practical though untaught philosophy. Let me conclude this sketch, which I am unconscious of having overcharged, with a few lines written by the late Mrs. Cockburn upon the subject. They made one among a set of poetical characters which were given as toasts among a few friends, and we must hold them to contain a striking likeness, since the original was recognized so soon as they were read aloud:—

"To a thing that's uncommon—a youth of discretion,
Who, though vastly handsome, despises flirtation:
To the friend in affliction, the heart of affection,
Who may hear the last trump without dread of detection."

In April 1758, my father married Anne Rutherford, eldest daughter of Dr. John Rutherford, professor of medicine in

the University of Edinburgh. He was one of those pupils of Boerhaave, to whom the school of medicine in our northern metropolis owes its rise, and a man distinguished for professional talent, for lively wit, and for literary acquirements. Dr. Rutherford was twice married. His first wife, of whom my mother is the sole surviving child, was a daughter of Sir John Swinton of Swinton, a family which produced many distinguished warriors during the middle ages, and which, for antiquity and honorable alliances, may rank with any in Britain. My grandfather's second wife was Miss Mackay, by whom he had a second family, of whom are now (1808) alive, Dr. Daniel Rutherford, professor of botany in the University of Edinburgh, and Misses Janet and Christian Rutherford, amiable and accomplished women.

My father and mother had a very numerous family, no fewer, I believe, than twelve children, of whom many were highly promising, though only five survived very early youth. My eldest brother Robert was bred in the King's service, and was in most of Rodney's battles. His temper was bold and haughty, and to me was often checkered with what I felt to be capricious tyranny. In other respects I loved him much, for he had a strong turn for literature, read poetry with taste and judgment, and composed verses himself, which had gained him great applause among his messmates. Witness the following elegy upon the supposed loss of the vessel, composed the night before Rodney's celebrated battle of April the 12th, 1782. It alludes to the various amusements of his mess:—

"No more the geese shall cackle on the poop,
No more the bagpipe through the orlop sound,
No more the midshipmen, a jovial group,
Shall toast the girls, and push the bottle round.
In death's dark road at anchor fast they stay,
Till Heaven's loud signal shall in thunder roar;
Then starting up, all hands shall quick obey,
Sheet home the topsail, and with speed unmoor."

Robert sang agreeably—(a virtue which was never seen in me)—understood the mechanical arts, and when in good humor, could regale us with many a tale of bold adventure

us a practical taste of what was then man-of-war's disci- and narrow escapes. When in bad humor, however, he gave pline, and kicked and cuffed without mercy. I have often thought how he might have distinguished himself had he continued in the navy until the present times, so glorious for nautical exploit. But the peace of 1783 cut off all hopes of promotion for those who had not great interest; and some disgust which his proud spirit had taken at harsh usage from a superior officer, combined to throw poor Robert into the East India Company's service, for which his habits were ill adapted. He made two voyages to the East, and died a victim to the climate.

John Scott, my second brother, is about three years older than I. He addicted himself to the military service, and is now brevet-major in the 73d regiment.[3]

I had an only sister, Anne Scott, who seemed to be from her cradle the butt for mischance to shoot arrows at. Her childhood was marked by perilous escapes from the most extraordinary accidents. Among others, I remember an iron-railed door leading into the area in the center of George's Square being closed by the wind, while her fingers were betwixt the hasp and staple. Her hand was thus locked in, and must have been smashed to pieces, had not the bones of her fingers been remarkably slight and thin. As it was, the hand was cruelly mangled. On another occasion, she was nearly drowned in a pond, or old quarry-hole, in what was then called Brown's Park, on the south side of the square. But the most unfortunate accident, and which, though it happened while she was only six years old, proved the remote cause of her death, was her cap accidentally taking fire. The child was alone in the room, and before assistance could be obtained, her head was dreadfully scorched. After a lingering and dangerous illness, she recovered—but never to enjoy perfect health. The slightest cold occasioned swellings in her face, and other indications of a delicate constitution. At length [in 1801], poor Anne was taken ill, and died after a very short interval. Her temper, like that of her brothers,

[3] He was this year made major of the second battalion by the kind intercession of Mr. Canning at the War-Office—1809. He retired from the army, and kept house with my mother. His health was totally broken, and he died, yet a young man, on 8th May 1816.—1826.

was peculiar, and in her, perhaps, it showed more odd, from the habits of indulgence which her nervous illness had formed. But she was at heart an affectionate and kind girl, neither void of talent nor of feeling, though living in an ideal world which she had framed to herself by the force of imagination. Anne was my junior by about a year.

A year lower in the list was my brother Thomas Scott, who is still alive.[4]

Last, and most unfortunate of our family, was my youngest brother, Daniel. With the same aversion to labor, or rather, I should say, the same determined indolence that marked us all, he had neither the vivacity of intellect which supplies the want of diligence, nor the pride which renders the most detested labor better than dependence or contempt. His career was as unfortunate as might be augured from such an unhappy combination; and, after various unsuccessful attempts to establish himself in life, he died on his return from the West Indies, in July 1806.

Having premised so much of my family, I return to my own story. I was born, as I believe, on the 15th August 1771, in a house belonging to my father, at the head of the College Wynd. It was pulled down, with others, to make room for the northern front of the new College. I was an uncommonly healthy child, but had nearly died in consequence of my first nurse being ill of a consumption, a circumstance which she chose to conceal, though to do so was murder to both herself and me. She went privately to consult Dr. Black, the celebrated professor of chemistry, who put my father on his guard. The woman was dismissed, and I was consigned to a healthy peasant, who is still alive to boast of her *laddie* being what she calls *a grand gentleman.* I showed every sign of health and strength until I was about eighteen months old.

[4] Poor Tom, a man of infinite humor and excellent parts, pursued for some time my father's profession; but he was unfortunate, from engaging in speculations respecting farms and matters out of the line of his proper business. He afterwards became paymaster of the 70th regiment, and died in Canada. Tom married Elizabeth, a daughter of the family of M'Culloch of Ardwell, an ancient Galwegian stock, by whom he left a son, Walter Scott, now second lieutenant of Engineers in the East India Company's service, Bombay—and three daughters, Jessie, married to Lieutenant-Colonel Huxley; 2, Anne; 3, Eliza—the two last still unmarried.—1826.

One night, I have been often told, I showed great reluctance to be caught and put to bed; and after being chased about the room, was apprehended and consigned to my dormitory with some difficulty. It was the last time I was to show such personal agility. In the morning, I was discovered to be affected with the fever which often accompanies the cutting of large teeth. It held me three days. On the fourth, when they went to bathe me as usual, they discovered that I had lost the power of my right leg. My grandfather, an excellent anatomist as well as physician, the late worthy Alexander Wood, and many others of the most respectable of the faculty, were consulted. There appeared to be no dislocation or sprain; blisters and other topical remedies were applied in vain. When the efforts of regular physicians had been exhausted, without the slightest success, my anxious parents, during the course of many years, eagerly grasped at every prospect of cure which was held out by the promise of empirics, or of ancient ladies or gentlemen who conceived themselves entitled to recommend various remedies, some of which were of a nature sufficiently singular. But the advice of my grandfather, Dr. Rutherford, that I should be sent to reside in the country, to give the chance of natural exertion, excited by free air and liberty, was first resorted to; and before I have the recollection of the slightest event, I was, agreeably to this friendly counsel, an inmate in the farm-house of Sandy-Knowe.

An odd incident is worth recording. It seems my mother had sent a maid to take charge of me, that I might be no inconvenience in the family. But the damsel sent on that important mission had left her heart behind her, in the keeping of some wild fellow, it is likely, who had done and said more to her than he was like to make good. She became extremely desirous to return to Edinburgh, and as my mother made a point of her remaining where she was she contracted a sort of hatred at poor me, as the cause of her being detained at Sandy-Knowe. This rose, I suppose, to a sort of delirious affection, for she confessed to old Alison Wilson, the housekeeper, that she had carried me up to the Craigs, meaning, under a strong temptation of the Devil, to cut my throat with her scissors, and bury me in the moss. Alison instantly

took possession of my person, and took care that her confidant should not be subject to any farther temptation, so far as I was concerned. She was dismissed, of course, and I have heard became afterwards a lunatic.[5]

It is here at Sandy-Knowe, in the residence of my paternal grandfather, already mentioned, that I have the first consciousness of existence; and I recollect distinctly that my situation and appearance were a little whimsical. Among the odd remedies recurred to to aid my lameness, some one had

[5] The epistle prefixed to the 6th canto of Marmion, contains a charming picture of the infant poet's feelings amidst the scenery and associations of Smailholm Tower and Sandy-Knowe.

> "It was a barren scene and wild,
> Where naked cliffs were rudely piled," &c., &c.

There are still (1836) living in that neighborhood two old women, who were in the domestic service of Sandy-Knowe, when the lame child was brought thither in the third year of his age. One of them, Tibby Hunter, remembers his coming well; and that "he was a sweet-tempered bairn, a darling with all about the house." The young ewe-milkers delighted, she says, to carry him about on their backs among the crags; and he was "very gleg (quick) at the uptake, and soon kenned every sheep and lamb by head-mark as well as any of them." His great pleasure, however, was in the society of the "aged hind" recorded in the epistle to Erskine, "Auld Sandy Ormiston," called, from the most dignified part of his function, "the Cow-bailie," who had the chief superintendence of the flocks that browsed upon "the velvet tufts of loveliest green." If the child saw him in the morning, he could not be satisfied unless the old man would set him astride on his shoulder, and take him to keep him company as he lay watching his charge.

The Cow-bailie blew a particular note on his whistle, which signified to the maid servants in the house below when the little boy wished to be carried home again. He told his friend, Mr. Skene of Rubislaw, when spending a summer day in his old age among these well-remembered crags, that he delighted to roll about on the grass all day long in the midst of the flock, and that "the sort of fellowship he thus formed with the sheep and lambs had impressed his mind with a degree of affectionate feeling towards them which had lasted throughout life." There is a story of his having been forgotten one day among the knolls when a thunder storm came on; and his aunt, suddenly recollecting his situation, and running out to bring him home, is said to have found him lying on his back, clapping his hands at the lightning, and crying out, "Bonny! bonny!" at every flash.—J. G. Lockhart.

recommended, that so often as a sheep was killed for the use of the family, I should be stripped, and swathed up in the skin, warm as it was flayed from the carcass of the animal. In this Tartar-like habiliment I well remember lying upon the floor of the little parlor in the farm-house, while my grandfather, a venerable old man with white hair, used every excitement to make me try to crawl. I also distinctly remember the late Sir George MacDougal of Mackerstoun, father of the present Sir Henry Hay MacDougal, joining in this kindly attempt. He was, God knows how,[6] a relation of ours, and I still recollect him in his old-fashioned military habit (he had been colonel of the Greys), with a small cocked hat, deeply laced, an embroidered scarlet waistcoat, and a light-colored coat, with milk-white locks tied in a military fashion, kneeling on the ground before me, and dragging his watch along the carpet to induce me to follow it. The benevolent old soldier and the infant wrapped in his sheepskin would have afforded an odd group to uninterested spectators. This must have happened about my third year, for Sir George MacDougal and my grandfather both died shortly after that period.

My grandmother continued for some years to take charge of the farm, assisted by my father's second brother, Mr. Thomas Scott, who resided at Crailing, as factor or land-steward for Mr. Scott of Danesfield, then proprietor of that estate.[7] This was during the heat of the American war, and I remember being as anxious on my uncle's weekly visits (for we heard news at no other time) to hear of the defeat of Washington, as if I had had some deep and personal cause of

[6] He was a second-cousin of my grandfather's. Isobel MacDougal, wife of Walter, the first Laird of Raeburn, and mother of Walter Scott, called Beardie, was grandaunt, I take it, to the late Sir George MacDougal. There was always great friendship between us and the Mackerstoun family. It singularly happened, that at the burial of the late Sir Henry MacDougal, my cousin William Scott, younger of Raeburn, and I myself, were the nearest blood-relations present, although our connection was of so old a date, and ranked as pall-bearers accordingly.—1826.

[7] My uncle afterwards resided at Elliston, and then took from Mr. Cornelius Elliot the estate of Woollee. Finally he retired to Monklaw, in the neighborhood of Jedburgh, where he died, 1823, at the advanced age of ninety years, and in full possession of his faculties. It was a fine thing to hear him talk over the change of the country which he had witnessed.—1826.

antipathy to him. I know not how this was combined with a very strong prejudice in favor of the Stuart family, which I had originally imbibed from the songs and tales of the Jacobites. This latter political propensity was deeply confirmed by the stories told in my hearing of the cruelties exercised in the executions at Carlisle, and in the Highlands, after the battle of Culloden. One or two of our own distant relations had fallen on that occasion, and I remember of detesting the name of Cumberland with more than infant hatred. Mr. Curle, farmer at Yetbyre, husband of one of my aunts, had been present at their execution; and it was probably from him that I first heard these tragic tales which made so great an impression on me. The local information, which I conceive had some share in forming my future taste and pursuits, I derived from the old songs and tales which then formed the amusement of a retired country family. My grandmother, in whose youth the old Border depredations were matter of recent tradition, used to tell me many a tale of Watt of Harden, Wight Willie of Aikwood, Jamie Telfer of the fair Dodhead, and other heroes—merrymen all of the persuasion and calling of Robin Hood and Little John. A more recent hero, but not of less note, was the celebrated *Diel of Littledean,* whom she well remembered, as he had married her mother's sister. Of this extraordinary person I learned many a story, grave and gay, comic and warlike. Two or three old books which lay in the window-seat were explored for my amusement in the tedious winter days. Automathes, and Ramsay's Tea-table Miscellany, were my favorites, although at a later period an odd volume of Josephus's Wars of the Jews divided my partiality.

My kind and affectionate aunt, Miss Janet Scott, whose memory will ever be dear to me, used to read these works to me with admirable patience, until I could repeat long passages by heart. The ballad of Hardyknute I was early master of, to the great annoyance of almost our only visitor, the worthy clergyman of the parish, Dr. Duncan, who had not patience to have a sober chat interrupted by my shouting forth this ditty. Methinks I now see his tall thin emaciated figure, his legs cased in clasped gambadoes, and his face of a length that would have rivaled the Knight of La Mancha's,

and hear him exclaiming, "One may as well speak in the mouth of a cannon as where that child is." With this little acidity, which was natural to him, he was a most excellent and benevolent man, a gentleman in every feeling, and altogether different from those of his order who cringe at the tables of the gentry, or domineer and riot at those of the yeomanry. In his youth he had been chaplain in the family of Lord Marchmont—had seen Pope—and could talk familiarly of many characters who had survived the Augustan age of Queen Anne. Though valetudinary, he lived to be nearly ninety, and to welcome to Scotland his son, Colonel William Duncan, who, with the highest character for military and civil merit, had made a considerable fortune in India. In [1795], a few days before his death, I paid him a visit, to inquire after his health. I found him emaciated to the last degree, wrapped in a tartan night-gown, and employed with all the activity of health and youth in correcting a history of the Revolution, which he intended should be given to the public when he was no more. He read me several passages with a voice naturally strong, and which the feelings of an author then raised above the depression of age and declining health. I begged him to spare this fatigue, which could not but injure his health. His answer was remarkable. "I know," he said, "that I cannot survive a fortnight—and what signifies an exertion that can at worst only accelerate my death a few days?" I marveled at the composure of this reply, for his appearance sufficiently vouched the truth of his prophecy, and rode home to my uncle's (then my abode), musing what there could be in the spirit of authorship that could inspire its votaries with the courage of martyrs. He died within less than the period he assigned—with which event I close my digression.

I was in my fourth year when my father was advised that the Bath waters might be of some advantage to my lameness. My affectionate aunt, although such a journey promised to a person of her retired habits anything but pleasure or amusement, undertook as readily to accompany me to the wells of Bladud, as if she had expected all the delight that ever the prospect of a watering-place held out to its most impatient visitants. My health was by this time a good deal confirmed

by the country air, and the influence of that imperceptible and unfatiguing exercise to which the good sense of my grandfather had subjected me; for when the day was fine, I was usually carried out and laid down beside the old shepherd, among the crags or rocks round which he fed his sheep. The impatience of a child soon inclined me to struggle with my infirmity, and I began by degrees to stand, to walk, and to run. Although the limb affected was much shrunk and contracted, my general health, which was of more importance, was much strengthened by being frequently in the open air; and, in a word, I who in a city had probably been condemned to hopeless and helpless decrepitude, was now a healthy, high-spirited, and, my lameness apart, a sturdy child—*non sine diis animosus infans.*

We went to London by sea, and it may gratify the curiosity of minute biographers to learn that our voyage was performed in the *Duchess of Buccleuch,* Captain Beatson, master. At London we made a short stay, and saw some of the common shows exhibited to strangers. When, twenty-five years afterwards, I visited the Tower of London and Westminster Abbey, I was astonished to find how accurate my recollections of those celebrated places of visitation proved to be, and I have ever since trusted more implicitly to my juvenile reminiscences. At Bath, where I lived about a year, I went through all the usual discipline of the pump-room and baths, but I believe without the least advantage to my lameness. During my residence at Bath, I acquired the rudiments of reading at a day-school, kept by an old dame near our lodgings, and I had never a more regular teacher, although I think I did not attend her a quarter of a year. An occasional lesson from my aunt supplied the rest. Afterwards, when grown a big boy, I had a few lessons from Mr. Stalker of Edinburgh, and finally from the Rev. Mr. Cleeve. But I never acquired a just pronunciation, nor could I read with much propriety.

In other respects my residence at Bath is marked by very pleasing recollections. The venerable John Home, author of Douglas, was then at the watering-place, and paid much attention to my aunt and to me. His wife, who has survived him, was then an invalid, and used to take the air in her carriage

on the Downs, when I was often invited to accompany her. But the most delightful recollections of Bath are dated after the arrival of my uncle, Captain Robert Scott, who introduced me to all the little amusements which suited my age, and above all, to the theater. The play was As You Like It; and the witchery of the whole scene is alive in my mind at this moment. I made, I believe, noise more than enough, and remember being so much scandalized at the quarrel between Orlando and his brother in the first scene, that I screamed out, "A'n't they brothers?" A few weeks' residence at home convinced me, who had till then been an only child in the house of my grandfather, that a quarrel between brothers was a very natural event.

The other circumstances I recollect of my residence in Bath are but trifling, yet I never recall them without a feeling of pleasure. The beauties of the parade (which of them I know not), with the river of Avon winding around it, and the lowing of the cattle from the opposite hills, are warm in my recollection, and are only rivaled by the splendors of a toy-shop somewhere near the Orange Grove. I had acquired, I know not by what means, a kind of superstitious terror for statuary of all kinds. No ancient Iconoclast or modern Calvinist could have looked on the outside of the Abbey church (if I mistake not, the principal church at Bath is so called) with more horror than the image of Jacob's Ladder, with all its angels, presented to my infant eye. My uncle effectually combated my terrors, and formally introduced me to a statue of Neptune, which perhaps still keeps guard at the side of the Avon, where a pleasure boat crosses to Spring Gardens.

After being a year at Bath, I returned first to Edinburgh, and afterwards for a season to Sandy-Knowe;—and thus the time whiled away till about my eighth year, when it was thought sea-bathing might be of service to my lameness.

For this purpose, still under my aunt's protection, I remained some weeks at Prestonpans; a circumstance not worth mentioning, excepting to record my juvenile intimacy with an old military veteran, Dalgetty by name, who had pitched his tent in that little village, after all his campaigns, subsisting upon an ensign's half-pay, though called by courtesy a Cap-

tain. As this old gentleman, who had been in all the German wars, found very few to listen to his tales of military feats, he formed a sort of alliance with me, and I used invariably to attend him for the pleasure of hearing those communications. Sometimes our conversation turned on the American war, which was then raging. It was about the time of Burgoyne's unfortunate expedition, to which my Captain and I augured different conclusions. Somebody had showed me a map of North America, and, struck with the rugged appearance of the country, and the quantity of lakes, I expressed some doubts on the subject of the General's arriving safely at the end of his journey, which were very indignantly refuted by the Captain. The news of the Saratoga disaster, while it gave me a little triumph, rather shook my intimacy with the veteran.[8]

From Prestonpans I was transported back to my father's house in George's Square, which continued to be my most established place of residence, until my marriage in 1797.

[8] Besides this veteran, I found another ally at Prestonpans, in the person of George Constable, an old friend of my father's, educated to the law, but retired upon his independent property, and generally residing near Dundee. He had many of those peculiarities of temper which long afterwards I tried to develop in the character of Jonathan Oldbuck. It is very odd, that though I am unconscious of anything in which I strictly copied the *manners* of my old friend, the resemblance was nevertheless detected by George Chalmers, Esq., solicitor, London, an old friend, both of my father and Mr. Constable, and who affirmed to my late friend, Lord Kinedder, that I must needs be the author of The Antiquary, since he recognized the portrait of George Constable. But my friend George was not so decided an enemy to womankind as his representative Monkbarns. On the contrary, I rather suspect that he had a *tendresse* for my aunt Jenny, who even then was a most beautiful woman, though somewhat advanced in life. To the close of her life, she had the finest eyes and teeth I ever saw, and though she could be sufficiently sharp when she had a mind, her general behavior was genteel and ladylike. However this might be, I derived a great deal of curious information from George Constable, both at this early period, and afterwards. He was constantly philandering about my aunt, and of course very kind to me. He was the first person who told me about Falstaff and Hotspur, and other characters in Shakespeare. What idea I annexed to them I know not, but I must have annexed some, for I remember quite well being interested on the subject. Indeed, I rather suspect that children derive impulses of a powerful and important kind in hearing things which they cannot entirely comprehend; and therefore, that to write *down* to children's understanding is a mistake: set them on the scent, and let them puzzle it out. To return to George Constable: I knew him well at a much later period. He used always to dine at my father's house

I felt the change from being a single indulged brat, to becoming a member of a large family, very severely; for under the gentle government of my kind grandmother, who was meekness itself, and of my aunt, who, though of an higher temper, was exceedingly attached to me, I had acquired a degree of license which could not be permitted in a large family. I had sense enough, however, to bend my temper to my new circumstances; but such was the agony which I internally experienced, that I have guarded against nothing more in the education of my own family, than against their acquiring habits of self-willed caprice and domination. I found much consolation during this period of mortification, in the partiality of my mother. She joined to a light and happy temper of mind a strong turn to study poetry and works of imagination. She was sincerely devout, but her religion was, as became her sex, of a cast less austere than my father's. Still, the discipline of the Presbyterian Sabbath was severely strict, and I think injudiciously so. Although Bunyan's Pilgrim, Gesner's Death of Abel, Rowe's Letters, and one or two other books, which, for that reason, I still have a favor for, were admitted to relieve the gloom of one dull sermon succeeding to another—there was far too much tedium annexed to the duties of the day; and in the end it did none of us any good.

of a Sunday, and was authorized to turn the conversation out of the austere and Calvinistic tone, which it usually maintained on that day, upon subjects of history or auld lang syne. He remembered the forty-five, and told many excellent stories, all with a strong dash of a peculiar caustic humor.

George's sworn ally as a brother antiquary was John Davidson, then Keeper of the Signet; and I remember his flattering and compelling me to go to dine there. A writer's apprentice with the Keeper of the Signet, whose least officer kept us in order!—It was an awful event. Thither, however, I went with some secret expectation of a scantling of good claret. Mr. D. had a son whose taste inclined him to the army, to which his father, who had designed him for the bar, gave a most unwilling consent. He was at this time a young officer, and he and I, leaving the two seniors to proceed in their chat as they pleased, never once opened our mouths either to them or each other. The Pragmatic Sanction happened unfortunately to become the theme of their conversation, when Constable said in jest, "Now, John, I'll wad you a plack that neither of these two lads ever heard of the Pragmatic Sanction."—"Not heard of the Pragmatic Sanction!" said John Davidson; "I would like to see that;" and with a voice of thunder, he asked his son the fatal question. As young D. modestly allowed he knew nothing about it, his father drove him from the table in a rage, and I absconded during the confusion; nor could Constable ever bring me back again to his friend Davidson's.—1826.

My week-day tasks were more agreeable. My lameness and my solitary habits had made me a tolerable reader, and my hours of leisure were usually spent in reading aloud to my mother Pope's translation of Homer, which, excepting a few traditionary ballads, and the songs in Allan Ramsay's Evergreen, was the first poetry which I perused. My mother had good natural taste and great feeling: she used to make me pause upon those passages which expressed generous and worthy sentiments, and if she could not divert me from those which were descriptive of battle and tumult, she contrived at least to divide my attention between them. My own enthusiasm, however, was chiefly awakened by the wonderful and the terrible—the common taste of children, but in which I have remained a child even unto this day. I got by heart, not as a task, but almost without intending it, the passages with which I was most pleased, and used to recite them aloud, both when alone and to others—more willingly, however, in my hours of solitude, for I had observed some auditors smile, and I dreaded ridicule at that time of life more than I have ever done since.

In [1778] I was sent to the second class of the Grammar School, or High School of Edinburgh, then taught by Mr. Luke Fraser, a good Latin scholar and a very worthy man. Though I had received, with my brothers, in private, lessons of Latin from Mr. James French, now a minister of the Kirk of Scotland, I was nevertheless rather behind the class in which I was placed both in years and in progress. This was a real disadvantage, and one to which a boy of lively temper and talents ought to be as little exposed as one who might be less expected to make up his lee-way, as it is called. The situation has the unfortunate effect of reconciling a boy of the former character (which in a posthumous work I may claim for my own) to holding a subordinate station among his classfellows—to which he would otherwise affix disgrace. There is also, from the constitution of the High School, a certain danger not sufficiently attended to. The boys take precedence in their *places,* as they are called, according to their merit, and it requires a long while, in general, before even a clever boy, if he falls behind the class, or is put into one for which he is not quite ready, can force his way to the situation

which his abilities really entitle him to hold. But, in the meanwhile, he is necessarily led to be the associate and companion of those inferior spirits with whom he is placed; for the system of precedence, though it does not limit the general intercourse among the boys, has nevertheless the effect of throwing them into clubs and coteries, according to the vicinity of the seats they hold. A boy of good talents, therefore, placed even for a time among his inferiors, especially if they be also his elders, learns to participate in their pursuits and objects of ambition, which are usually very distinct from the acquisition of learning; and it will be well if he does not also imitate them in that indifference which is contented with bustling over a lesson so as to avoid punishment, without affecting superiority or aiming at reward. It was probably owing to this circumstance, that, although at a more advanced period of life I have enjoyed considerable facility in acquiring languages, I did not make any great figure at the High School—or, at least, any exertions which I made were desultory and little to be depended on.

Our class contained some very excellent scholars. The first *Dux* was James Buchan, who retained his honored place, almost without a day's interval, all the while we were at the High School. He was afterwards at the head of the medical staff in Egypt, and in exposing himself to the plague infection, by attending the hospitals there, displayed the same well-regulated and gentle, yet determined perseverance, which placed him most worthily at the head of his school-fellows, while many lads of livelier parts and dispositions held an inferior station. The next best scholars *(sed longo intervallo)* were my friend David Douglas, the heir and *élève* of the celebrated Adam Smith, and James Hope, now a Writer to the Signet, both since well known and distinguished in their departments of the law. As for myself, I glanced like a meteor from one end of the class to the other, and commonly disgusted my kind master as much by negligence and frivolity, as I occasionally pleased him by flashes of intellect and talent. Among my companions, my good-nature and a flow of ready imagination rendered me very popular. Boys are uncommonly just in their feelings, and at least equally generous. My lameness, and the efforts which I made to supply that

disadvantage, by making up in address what I wanted in activity, engaged the latter principle in my favor; and in the winter play hours, when hard exercise was impossible, my tales used to assemble an admiring audience round Lucky Brown's fireside, and happy was he that could sit next to the inexhaustible narrator. I was also, though often negligent of my own task, always ready to assist my friends; and hence I had a little party of staunch partisans and adherents, stout of hand and heart, though somewhat dull of head—the very tools for raising a hero to eminence. So, on the whole, I made a brighter figure in the *yards* than in the *class*.[9]

My father did not trust our education solely to our High School lessons. We had a tutor at home [Mr. James Mitchell], a young man of an excellent disposition, and a laborious student. He was bred to the Kirk, but unfortunately took such a very strong turn to fanaticism, that he afterwards resigned an excellent living in a seaport town, merely because he could not persuade the mariners of the guilt of setting sail of a Sabbath,—in which, by the by, he was less likely to be successful, as, *cæteris paribus,* sailors, from an opinion that it is a fortunate omen, always choose to weigh anchor on that day. The caliber of this young man's understanding may be judged of by this anecdote; but in other respects, he was a faithful and active instructor; and from him chiefly I learned writing and arithmetic. I repeated to him my French lessons, and studied with him my themes in the classics, but not classically. I also acquired, by disputing with him (for this he readily permitted), some knowledge of school-divinity and church-history, and a great acquaintance in particular with the old books describing the early history of the Church of Scotland, the wars and sufferings of the Covenanters, and so forth. I, with a head on fire for chivalry, was a Cavalier; my friend was a Roundhead:

[9] I read not long since, in that authentic record called the *Percy Anecdotes,* that I had been educated at Musselburgh school, where I had been distinguished as an absolute dunce; only Dr. Blair, seeing farther into the mill-stone, had pronounced there was fire in it. I never was at Musselburgh school in my life, and though I have met Dr. Blair at my father's and elsewhere, I never had the good fortune to attract his notice, to my knowledge. Lastly, I was never a dunce, nor thought to be so, but an incorrigibly idle imp, who was always longing to do something else than what was enjoined him.—1826.

I was a Tory, and he was a Whig. I hated Presbyterians, and admired Montrose with his victorious Highlanders; he liked the Presbyterian Ulysses, the dark and politic Argyle: so that we never wanted subjects of dispute; but our disputes were always amicable. In all these tenets there was no real conviction on my part, arising out of acquaintance with the views or principles of either party; nor had my antagonist address enough to turn the debate on such topics. I took up my politics at that period, as King Charles II. did his religion, from an idea that the Cavalier creed was the more gentlemanlike persuasion of the two.

After having been three years under Mr. Fraser, our class was, in the usual routine of the school, turned over to Dr. Adam, the Rector. It was from this respectable man that I first learned the value of the knowledge I had hitherto considered only as a burdensome task. It was the fashion to remain two years at his class, where we read Cæsar, and Livy, and Sallust, in prose; Virgil, Horace, and Terence, in verse. I had by this time mastered, in some degree, the difficulties of the language, and began to be sensible of its beauties. This was really gathering grapes from thistles; nor shall I soon forget the swelling of my little pride when the Rector pronounced, that though many of my school-fellows understood the Latin better, *Gualterus Scott* was behind few in following and enjoying the author's meaning. Thus encouraged, I distinguished myself by some attempts at poetical versions from Horace and Virgil.[10] Dr. Adam used to invite his scholars

[10] One of these little pieces, written in a weak boyish scrawl within penciled marks still visible, had been carefully preserved by his mother; it was folded up in a cover inscribed—"*My Walter's first lines,* 1782." These read:

"In awful ruins Ætna thunders nigh,
And sends in pitchy whirlwinds to the sky
Black clouds of smoke, which, still as they aspire,
From their dark sides there bursts the glowing fire;
At other times huge balls of fire are toss'd,
That lick the stars, and in the smoke are lost:
Sometimes the mount, with vast convulsions torn,
Emits huge rocks, which instantly are borne
With loud explosions to the starry skies,
The stones made liquid as the huge mass flies,
Then back again with greater weight recoils,
While Ætna thundering from the bottom boils."

to such essays, but never made them tasks. I gained some distinction upon these occasions, and the Rector in future took much notice of me; and his judicious mixture of censure and praise went far to counterbalance my habits of indolence and inattention. I saw I was expected to do well, and I was piqued in honor to vindicate my master's favorable opinion. I climbed, therefore, to the first form; and, though I never made a first-rate Latinist, my school-fellows, and what was of more consequence, I myself, considered that I had a character for learning to maintain. Dr. Adam, to whom I owed so much, never failed to remind me of my obligations when I had made some figure in the literary world. He was, indeed, deeply imbued with that fortunate vanity which alone could induce a man who has arms to pare and burn a muir, to submit to the yet more toilsome task of cultivating youth. As Catholics confide in the imputed righteousness of their saints, so did the good old Doctor plume himself upon the success of his scholars in life, all of which he never failed (and often justly) to claim as the creation, or at least the fruits, of his early instructions. He remembered the fate of every boy at his school during the fifty years he had superintended it, and always traced their success or misfortunes entirely to their attention or negligence when under his care. His "noisy mansion," which to others would have been a melancholy bedlam, was the pride of his heart; and the only fatigues he felt, amidst din and tumult, and the necessity of reading themes, hearing lessons, and maintaining some degree of order at the same time, were relieved by comparing himself to Cæsar, who could dictate to three secretaries at once;—so ready is vanity to lighten the labors of duty.

It is a pity that a man so learned, so admirably adapted for his station, so useful, so simple, so easily contented, should have had other subjects of mortification. But the magistrates of Edinburgh, not knowing the treasure they possessed in Dr. Adam, encouraged a savage fellow, called Nicol, one of the undermasters, in insulting his person and authority. This man was an excellent classical scholar, and an admirable convivial humorist (which latter quality recommended him to the friendship of Burns); but worthless, drunken, and inhumanly cruel to the boys under his charge. He carried his

feud against the Rector within an inch of assassination, for he waylaid and knocked him down in the dark. The favor which this worthless rival obtained in the town-council led to other consequences, which for some time clouded poor Adam's happiness and fair fame. When the French Revolution broke out, and parties ran high in approving or condemning it, the Doctor incautiously joined the former. This was very natural, for as all his ideas of existing governments were derived from his experience of the town-council of Edinburgh, it must be admitted they scarce brooked comparison with the free states of Rome and Greece, from which he borrowed his opinions concerning republics. His want of caution in speaking on the political topics of the day lost him the respect of the boys, most of whom were accustomed to hear very different opinions on those matters in the bosom of their families. This, however (which was long after my time), passed away with other heats of the period, and the Doctor continued his labors till about a year since, when he was struck with palsy while teaching his class. He survived a few days, but becoming delirious before his dissolution, conceived he was still in school, and after some expressions of applause or censure, he said, "But it grows dark—the boys may dismiss,"—and instantly expired.

From Dr. Adam's class I should, according to the usual routine, have proceeded immediately to college. But, fortunately, I was not yet to lose, by a total dismission from constraint, the acquaintance with the Latin which I had acquired. My health had become rather delicate from rapid growth, and my father was easily persuaded to allow me to spend half-a-year at Kelso with my kind aunt, Miss Janet Scott, whose inmate I again became. It was hardly worth mentioning that I had frequently visited at her home during our short vacations.

At this time she resided in a small house, situated very pleasantly in a large garden, to the eastward of the churchyard of Kelso, which extended down to the Tweed. It was then my father's property, from whom it was afterwards purchased by my uncle. My grandmother was now dead, and my aunt's only companion, besides an old maid servant, was my cousin, Miss Barbara Scott, now Mrs. Meik. My time

was here left entirely to my own disposal excepting for about four hours in the day, when I was expected to attend the Grammar School of the village. The teacher, at that time, was Mr. Lancelot Whale, an excellent classical scholar, a humorist, and a worthy man. He had a supreme antipathy to the puns which his very uncommon name frequently gave rise to; insomuch, that he made his son spell the word *Wale,* which only occasioned the young man being nicknamed *the Prince of Wales* by the military mess to which he belonged. As for Whale, senior, the least allusion to Jonah, or the terming him an odd fish, or any similar quibble, was sure to put him beside himself. In point of knowledge and taste, he was far too good for the situation he held, which only required that he should give his scholars a rough foundation in the Latin language. My time with him, though short, was spent greatly to my advantage and his gratification. He was glad to escape to Persius and Tacitus from the eternal Rudiments and Cornelius Nepos; and as perusing these authors with one who began to understand them was to him a labor of love, I made considerable progress under his instructions. I suspect, indeed, that some of the time dedicated to me was withdrawn from the instruction of his more regular scholars; but I was as grateful as I could. I acted as usher, and heard the inferior classes, and I spouted the speech of Galgacus at the public examination, which did not make the less impression on the audience that few of them probably understood one word of it.

In the meanwhile my acquaintance with English literature was gradually extending itself. In the intervals of my school hours I had always perused with avidity such books of history or poetry or voyages and travels as chance presented to me—not forgetting the usual, or rather ten times the usual, quantity of fairy tales, eastern stories, romances, &c. These studies were totally unregulated and undirected. My tutor thought it almost a sin to open a profane play or poem; and my mother, besides that she might be in some degree trammeled by the religious scruples which he suggested, had no longer the opportunity to hear me read poetry as formerly. I found, however, in her dressing-room (where I slept at one time) some odd volumes of Shakespeare, nor can I easily

forget the rapture with which I sat up in my shirt reading them by the light of a fire in her apartment, until the bustle of the family rising from supper warned me it was time to creep back to my bed, where I was supposed to have been safely deposited since nine o'clock. Chance, however, threw in my way a poetical preceptor. This was no other than the excellent and benevolent Dr. Blacklock, well known at that time as a literary character. I know not how I attracted his attention, and that of some of the young men who boarded in his family; but so it was that I became a frequent and favored guest. The kind old man opened to me the stores of his library, and through his recommendation I became intimate with Ossian and Spenser. I was delighted with both, yet I think chiefly with the latter poet. The tawdry repetitions of the Ossianic phraseology disgusted me rather sooner than might have been expected from my age. But Spenser I could have read for ever. Too young to trouble myself about the allegory, I considered all the knights and ladies and dragons and giants in their outward and exoteric sense, and God only knows how delighted I was to find myself in such society. As I had always a wonderful facility in retaining in my memory whatever verses pleased me, the quantity of Spenser's stanzas which I could repeat was really marvelous. But this memory of mine was a very fickle ally, and has through my whole life acted merely upon its own capricious motion, and might have enabled me to adopt old Beattie of Meikledale's answer, when complimented by a certain reverend divine on the strength of the same faculty:—"No, sir," answered the old Borderer, "I have no command of my memory. It only retains what hits my fancy, and probably, sir, if you were to preach to me for two hours, I would not be able when you finished to remember a word you had been saying." My memory was precisely of the same kind: it seldom failed to preserve most tenaciously a favorite passage of poetry, a play-house ditty, or, above all, a Border-raid ballad; but names, dates, and the other technicalities of history, escaped me in a most melancholy degree. The philosophy of history, a much more important subject, was also a sealed book at this period of my life; but I gradually assembled much of what was striking and picturesque

in historical narrative; and when, in riper years, I attended more to the deduction of general principles, I was furnished with a powerful host of examples in illustration of them. I was, in short, like an ignorant gamester, who kept up a good hand until he knew how to play it.

I left the High School, therefore, with a great quantity of general information, ill arranged, indeed, and collected without system, yet deeply impressed upon my mind; readily assorted by my power of connection and memory, and gilded, if I may be permitted to say so, by a vivid and active imagination. If my studies were not under any direction at Edinburgh, in the country, it may be well imagined, they were less so. A respectable subscription library, a circulating library of ancient standing, and some private book-shelves, were open to my random perusal, and I waded into the stream like a blind man into a ford, without the power of searching my way, unless by groping for it. My appetite for books was as ample and indiscriminating as it was indefatigable, and I since have had too frequent reason to repent that few ever read so much, and to so little purpose.

Among the valuable acquisitions I made about this time, was an acquaintance with Tasso's Jerusalem Delivered, through the flat medium of Mr. Hoole's translation. But above all, I then first became acquainted with Bishop Percy's Reliques of Ancient Poetry. As I had been from infancy devoted to legendary lore of this nature, and only reluctantly withdrew my attention, from the scarcity of materials and the rudeness of those which I possessed, it may be imagined, but cannot be described, with what delight I saw pieces of the same kind which had amused my childhood, and still continued in secret the Delilahs of my imagination, considered as the subject of sober research, grave commentary, and apt illustration, by an editor who showed his poetical genius was capable of emulating the best qualities of what his pious labor preserved. I remember well the spot where I read these volumes for the first time. It was beneath a huge platanus-tree, in the ruins of what had been intended for an old-fashioned arbor in the *garden* I have mentioned. The summer-day sped onward so fast, that notwithstanding the sharp appetite of thirteen, I forgot the hour of dinner, was sought

for with anxiety, and was still found entranced in my intellectual banquet. To read and to remember was in this instance the same thing, and henceforth I overwhelmed my school-fellows, and all who would hearken to me, with tragical recitations from the ballads of Bishop Percy. The first time, too, I could scrape a few shillings together, which were not common occurrences with me, I bought unto myself a copy of these beloved volumes; nor do I believe I ever read a book half so frequently, or with half the enthusiasm. About this period also I became acquainted with the works of Richardson, and those of Mackenzie—(whom in later years I became entitled to call my friend)—with Fielding, Smollet, and some others of our best novelists.

To this period also I can trace distinctly the awaking of that delightful feeling for the beauties of natural objects which has never since deserted me. The neighborhood of Kelso, the most beautiful, if not the most romantic village in Scotland, is eminently calculated to awaken these ideas. It presents objects, not only grand in themselves, but venerable from their association. The meeting of two superb rivers, the Tweed and the Teviot, both renowned in song—the ruins of an ancient Abbey—the more distant vestiges of Roxburgh Castle—the modern mansion of Fleurs, which is so situated as to combine the ideas of ancient baronial grandeur with those of modern taste—are in themselves objects of the first class; yet are so mixed, united, and melted among a thousand other beauties of a less prominent description, that they harmonize into one general picture, and please rather by unison than by concord. I believe I have written unintelligibly upon this subject, but it is fitter for the pencil than the pen. The romantic feelings which I have described as predominating in my mind, naturally rested upon and associated themselves with these grand features of the landscape around me; and the historical incidents, or traditional legends connected with many of them, gave to my admiration a sort of intense impression of reverence, which at times made my heart feel too big for its bosom. From this time the love of natural beauty, more especially when combined with ancient ruins, or remains of our fathers' piety or splendor, became with me an insatiable passion, which, if circum-

stances had permitted, I would willingly have gratified by traveling over half the globe.

I was recalled to Edinburgh about the time when the College meets, and put at once to the Humanity class, under Mr. Hill, and the first Greek class, taught by Mr. Dalzell. The former held the reins of discipline very loosely, and though beloved by his students—for he was a good-natured man as well as a good scholar—he had not the art of exciting our attention as well as liking. This was a dangerous character with whom to trust one who relished labor as little as I did; and amid the riot of his class I speedily lost much of what I had learned under Adam and Whale. At the Greek class, I might have made a better figure, for Professor Dalzell maintained a great deal of authority, and was not only himself an admirable scholar, but was always deeply interested in the progress of his students. But here lay the villainy. Almost all my companions who had left the High School at the same time with myself, had acquired a smattering of Greek before they came to College. I, alas! had none; and finding myself far inferior to all my fellow-students, I could hit upon no better mode of vindicating my equality than by professing my contempt for the language, and my resolution not to learn it. A youth who died early, himself an excellent Greek scholar, saw my negligence and folly with pain, instead of contempt. He came to call on me in George's Square, and pointed out in the strongest terms the silliness of the conduct I had adopted, told me I was distinguished by the name of the *Greek Blockhead*, and exhorted me to redeem my reputation while it was called to-day. My stubborn pride received this advice with sulky civility; the birth of my Mentor (whose name was Archibald, the son of an inn-keeper) did not, as I thought in my folly, authorize him to intrude upon me his advice. The other was not sharp-sighted, or his consciousness of a generous intention overcame his resentment. He offered me his daily and nightly assistance, and pledged himself to bring me forward with the foremost of my class. I felt some twinges of conscience, but they were unable to prevail over my pride and self-conceit. The poor lad left me more in sorrow than in anger, nor did we ever meet again. All hopes of my progress in the Greek were

now over; insomuch that when we were required to write essays on the authors we had studied, I had the audacity to produce a composition in which I weighed Homer against Ariosto, and pronounced him wanting in the balance. I supported this heresy by a profusion of bad reading and flimsy argument. The wrath of the Professor was extreme, while at the same time he could not suppress his surprise at the quantity of out-of-the-way knowledge which I displayed. He pronounced upon me the severe sentence—that dunce I was, and dunce was to remain—which, however, my excellent and learned friend lived to revoke over a bottle of Burgundy, at our literary Club at Fortune's, of which he was a distinguished member.

Meanwhile, as if to eradicate my slightest tincture of Greek, I fell ill during the middle of Mr. Dalzell's second class, and migrated a second time to Kelso—where I again continued a long time reading what and how I pleased, and of course reading nothing but what afforded me immediate entertainment. The only thing which saved my mind from utter dissipation, was that turn for historical pursuit, which never abandoned me even at the idlest period. I had forsworn the Latin classics for no reason I know of, unless because they were akin to the Greek; but the occasional perusal of Buchanan's history, that of Mathew of Paris, and other monkish chronicles, kept up a kind of familiarity with the language even in its rudest state. But I forgot the very letters of the Greek alphabet; a loss never to be repaired, considering what that language is, and who they were who employed it in their compositions.

About this period—or soon afterwards—my father judged it proper I should study mathematics; a study upon which I entered with all the ardor of novelty. My tutor was an aged person, Dr. MacFait, who had in his time been distinguished as a teacher of this science. Age, however, and some domestic inconveniences, had diminished his pupils, and lessened his authority amongst the few who remained. I think, that had I been more fortunately placed for instruction, or had I had the spur of emulation, I might have made some progress in this science, of which, under the circumstances I have mentioned, I only acquired a very superficial smattering.

In other studies I was rather more fortunate. I made some progress in Ethics under Professor John Bruce, and was selected as one of his students whose progress he approved, to read an essay before Principal Robertson. I was farther instructed in Moral Philosophy at the class of Mr. Dugald Stewart, whose striking and impressive eloquence riveted the attention even of the most volatile student. To sum up my academical studies, I attended the class of History, then taught by the present Lord Woodhouselee, and, as far as I remember, no others, excepting those of the Civil and Municipal Law. So that, if my learning be flimsy and inaccurate, the reader must have some compassion even for an idle workman who had so narrow a foundation to build upon. If, however, it should ever fall to the lot of youth to peruse these pages—let such a reader remember, that it is with the deepest regret that I recollect in my manhood the opportunities of learning which I neglected in my youth; that through every part of my literary career I have felt pinched and hampered by my own ignorance; and that I would at this moment give half the reputation I have had the good fortune to acquire, if by doing so I could rest the remaining part upon a sound foundation of learning and science.

I imagine my father's reason for sending me to so few classes in the College, was a desire that I should apply myself particularly to my legal studies. He had not determined whether I should fill the situation of an Advocate or a Writer; but judiciously considering the technical knowledge of the latter to be useful at least, if not essential, to a barrister, he resolved I should serve the ordinary apprenticeship of five years to his own profession. I accordingly entered into indentures with my father about 1785-6, and entered upon the dry and barren wilderness of forms and conveyances.

I cannot reproach myself with being entirely an idle apprentice—far less, as the reader might reasonably have expected,

"A clerk foredoom'd my father's soul to cross."

The drudgery, indeed, of the office I disliked, and the confinement I altogether detested; but I loved my father, and I felt the rational pride and pleasure of rendering myself useful

to him. I was ambitious also; and among my companions in labor, the only way to gratify ambition was to labor hard and well. Other circumstances reconciled me in some measure to the confinement. The allowance for copy-money furnished a little fund for the *menus plaisirs* of the circulating library and the Theater, and this was no trifling incentive to labor. When actually at the oar, no man could pull it harder than I; and I remember writing upwards of 120 folio pages with no interval either for food or rest. Again, the hours of attendance on the office were lightened by the power of choosing my own books, and reading them in my own way, which often consisted in beginning at the middle or the end of a volume. A deceased friend, who was a fellow-apprentice with me, used often to express his surprise that, after such a hop-step-and-jump perusal, I knew as much of the book as he had been able to acquire from reading it in the usual manner. My desk usually contained a store of most miscellaneous volumes, especially works of fiction of every kind, which were my supreme delight. I might except novels, unless those of the better and higher class; for though I read many of them, yet it was with more selection than might have been expected. The whole Jemmy and Jenny Jessamy tribe I abhorred; and it required the art of Burney, or the feeling of Mackenzie, to fix my attention upon a domestic tale. But all that was adventurous and romantic I devoured without much discrimination, and I really believe I have read as much nonsense of this class as any man now living. Everything which touched on knight-errantry was particularly acceptable to me, and I soon attempted to imitate what I so greatly admired. My efforts, however, were in the manner of the tale-teller, not of the bard.

My greatest intimate, from the days of my school-tide, was Mr. John Irving, now a Writer to the Signet. We lived near each other, and by joint agreement were wont, each of us, to compose a romance for the other's amusement. These legends, in which the martial and the miraculous always predominated, we rehearsed to each other during our walks, which were usually directed to the most solitary spots about Arthur's Seat and Salisbury Crags. We naturally sought seclusion, for we were conscious no small degree of ridicule

would have attended our amusement, if the nature of it had become known. Whole holidays were spent in this singular pastime, which continued for two or three years, and had, I believe, no small effect in directing the turn of my imagination to the chivalrous and romantic in poetry and prose.

Meanwhile, the translations of Mr. Hoole having made me acquainted with Tasso and Ariosto, I learned from his notes on the latter, that the Italian language contained a fund of romantic lore. A part of my earnings was dedicated to an Italian class which I attended twice a-week, and rapidly acquired some proficiency. I had previously renewed and extended my knowledge of the French language, from the same principle of romantic research. Tressan's romances, the Bibliothèque Bleue, and Bibliothèque de Romans, were already familiar to me; and I now acquired similar intimacy with the works of Dante, Boiardo, Pulci, and other eminent Italian authors. I fastened also, like a tiger, upon every collection of old songs or romances which chance threw in my way, or which my scrutiny was able to discover on the dusty shelves of James Sibbald's circulating library in the Parliament Square. This collection, now dismantled and dispersed, contained at that time many rare and curious works, seldom found in such a collection. Mr. Sibbald himself, a man of rough manners but of some taste and judgment, cultivated music and poetry, and in his shop I had a distant view of some literary characters, besides the privilege of ransacking the stores of old French and Italian books, which were in little demand among the bulk of his subscribers. Here I saw the unfortunate Andrew Macdonald, author of Vimonda; and here, too, I saw at a distance, the boast of Scotland, Robert Burns. Of the latter I shall presently have occasion to speak more fully.

I am inadvertently led to confound dates while I talk of this remote period, for, as I have no notes, it is impossible for me to remember with accuracy the progress of studies, if they deserve the name, so irregular and miscellaneous.

But about the second year of my apprenticeship, my health, which from rapid growth and other causes had been hitherto rather uncertain and delicate, was affected by the breaking of a blood-vessel. The regimen I had to undergo on this occa-

sion was far from agreeable. It was spring, and the weather raw and cold, yet I was confined to bed with a single blanket, and bled and blistered till I scarcely had a pulse left. I had all the appetite of a growing boy, but was prohibited any sustenance beyond what was absolutely necessary for the support of nature, and that in vegetables alone. Above all, with a considerable disposition to talk, I was not permitted to open my lips without one or two old ladies who watched my couch being ready at once to souse upon me, "Imposing silence with a stilly sound." My only refuge was reading and playing at chess. To the romances and poetry, which I chiefly delighted in, I had always added a study of history, especially as connected with military events. I was encouraged in this latter study by a tolerable acquaintance with geography, and by the opportunities I had enjoyed while with Mr. MacFait to learn the meaning of the more ordinary terms of fortification. While, therefore, I lay in this dreary and silent solitude, I fell upon the resource of illustrating the battles I read of by the childish expedient of arranging shells, and seeds, and pebbles, so as to represent encountering armies. Diminutive cross-bows were contrived to mimic artillery, and with the assistance of a friendly carpenter, I contrived to model a fortress, which, like that of uncle Toby, represented whatever place happened to be uppermost in my imagination. I fought my way thus through Vertot's Knights of Malta —a book which, as it hovered between history and romance, was exceedingly dear to me; and Orme's interesting and beautiful History of Indostan, whose copious plans, aided by the clear and luminous explanations of the author, rendered my imitative amusement peculiarly easy. Other moments of these weary weeks were spent in looking at the Meadow Walks, by assistance of a combination of mirrors so arranged that, while lying in bed, I could see the troops march out to exercise, or any other incident which occurred on that promenade.

After one or two relapses, my constitution recovered the injury it had sustained, though for several months afterwards I was restricted to a severe vegetable diet. And I must say, in passing, that though I gained health under this necessary restriction, yet it was far from being agreeable to

me, and I was affected whilst under its influence with a nervousness which I never felt before or since. A disposition to start upon slight alarms—a want of decision in feeling and acting, which has not usually been my failing, an acute sensibility to trifling inconveniences—and an unnecessary apprehension of contingent misfortunes, rise to my memory as connected with my vegetable diet, although they may very possibly have been entirely the result of the disorder, and not of the cure. Be this as it may, with this illness I bade farewell both to disease and medicine; for since that time, till the hour I am now writing, I have enjoyed a state of the most robust health, having only had to complain of occasional headaches or stomachic affections when I have been long without taking exercise, or have lived too convivially—the latter having been occasionally, though not habitually, the error of my youth, as the former has been of my advanced life.

My frame gradually became hardened with my constitution, and being both tall and muscular, I was rather disfigured than disabled by my lameness. This personal disadvantage did not prevent me from taking much exercise on horseback, and making long journeys on foot, in the course of which I often walked from twenty to thirty miles a day. A distinct instance occurs to me. I remember walking with poor James Ramsay, my fellow-apprentice, now no more, and two other friends, to breakfast at Prestonpans. We spent the forenoon in visiting the ruins at Seton and the field of battle at Preston—dined at Prestonpans on *tiled haddocks* very sumptuously—drank half a bottle of port each, and returned in the evening. This could not be less than thirty miles, nor do I remember being at all fatigued upon the occasion.

These excursions on foot or horseback formed by far my most favorite amusement. I have all my life delighted in traveling, though I have never enjoyed that pleasure upon a large scale. It was a propensity which I sometimes indulged so unduly as to alarm and vex my parents. Wood, water, wilderness itself, had an inexpressible charm for me, and I had a dreamy way of going much further than I intended, so that unconsciously my return was protracted, and my parents had sometimes serious cause of uneasiness. For ex-

ample, I once set out with Mr. George Abercromby [11] (the son of the immortal General), Mr. William Clerk, and some others, to fish in the lake above Howgate, and the stream which descends from it into the Esk. We breakfasted at Howgate, and fished the whole day; and while we were on our return next morning, I was easily seduced by William Clerk, then a great intimate, to visit Pennycuik-House, the seat of his family. Here he and John Irving, and I for their sake, were overwhelmed with kindness by the late Sir John Clerk and his lady, the present Dowager Lady Clerk. The pleasure of looking at fine pictures, the beauty of the place, and the flattering hospitality of the owners, drowned all recollection of home for a day or two. Meanwhile our companions, who had walked on without being aware of our digression, returned to Edinburgh without us, and excited no small alarm in my father's household. At length, however, they became accustomed to my escapades. My father used to protest to me on such occasions that he thought I was born to be a strolling peddler; and though the prediction was intended to mortify my conceit, I am not sure that I altogether disliked it. I was now familiar with Shakespeare, and thought of Autolycus's song—

"Jog on, jog on, the foot-path way,
And merrily hent the stile-a;
A merry heart goes all the day,
Your sad tires in a mile-a."

My principal object in these excursions was the pleasure of seeing romantic scenery, or what afforded me at least equal pleasure, the places which had been distinguished by remarkable historical events. The delight with which I regarded the former, of course had general approbation, but I often found it difficult to procure sympathy with the interest I felt in the latter. Yet to me, the wandering over the field of Bannockburn was the source of more exquisite pleasure than gazing upon the celebrated landscape from the battlements of Stirling castle. I do not by any means infer that I was dead to the feeling of picturesque scenery; on the contrary, few delighted more in its general effect. But I was

[11] Now Lord Abercromby.—1826.

unable with the eye of a painter to dissect the various parts of the scene, to comprehend how the one bore upon the other, to estimate the effect which various features of the view had in producing its leading and general effect. I have never, indeed, been capable of doing this with precision or nicety, though my latter studies have led me to amend and arrange my original ideas upon the subject. Even the humble ambition, which I long cherished, of making sketches of those places which interested me, from a defect of eye or of hand was totally ineffectual. After long study and many efforts, I was unable to apply the elements of perspective or of shade to the scene before me, and was obliged to relinquish in despair an art which I was most anxious to practice. But show me an old castle or a field of battle, and I was at home at once, filled it with its combatants in their proper costume, and overwhelmed my hearers by the enthusiasm of my description. In crossing Magus Moor, near St. Andrews, the spirit moved me to give a picture of the assassination of the Archbishop of St. Andrews to some fellow-travelers with whom I was accidentally associated, and one of them, though well acquainted with the story, protested my narrative had frightened away his night's sleep. I mention this to show the distinction between a sense of the picturesque in action and in scenery. If I have since been able in poetry to trace with some success the principles of the latter, it has always been with reference to its general and leading features, or under some alliance with moral feeling and even this proficiency has cost me study.—Meanwhile I endeavored to make amends for my ignorance of drawing by adopting a sort of technical memory respecting the scenes I visited. Wherever I went I cut a piece of a branch from a tree—these constituted what I called my log-book; and I intended to have a set of chessmen out of them, each having reference to the place where it was cut—as the kings from Falkland and Holy-Rood; the queens from Queen Mary's yew tree at Crookston; the bishops from abbeys or episcopal palaces; the knights from baronial residences; the rooks from royal fortresses; and the pawns generally from places worthy of historical note. But this whimsical design I never carried into execution.

With music it was even worse than with painting. My mother was anxious we should at least learn Psalmody, but the incurable defects of my voice and ear soon drove my teacher to despair.[12] It is only by long practice that I have acquired the power of selecting or distinguishing melodies; and although now few things delight or affect me more than a simple tune sung with feeling, yet I am sensible that even this pitch of musical taste has only been gained by attention and habit, and, as it were, by my feeling of the words being associated with the tune. I have therefore been usually unsuccessful in composing words to a tune, although my friend Dr. Clarke, and other musical composers, have sometimes been able to make a happy union between their music and my poetry.

In other points, however, I began to make some amends for the irregularity of my education. It is well known that in Edinburgh one great spur to emulation among youthful students is in those associations called *literary societies,* formed not only for the purpose of debate, but of composition. These undoubtedly have some disadvantages, where a bold, petulant, and disputatious temper happens to be combined with considerable information and talent. Still, however, in order to such a person being actually spoiled by his mixing in such debates, his talents must be of a very rare nature, or his effrontery must be proof to every species of assault; for there is generally, in a well-selected society of this nature, talent sufficient to meet the forwardest, and satire enough to penetrate the most undaunted. I am particularly obliged to this

[12] The late Alexander Campbell, a warm-hearted man, and an enthusiast in Scottish music, which he sang most beautifully, had this ungrateful task imposed on him. He was a man of many accomplishments, but dashed with a *bizarrerie* of temper which made them useless to their proprietor. He wrote several books—as a Tour in Scotland, &c.;—and he made an advantageous marriage, but fell nevertheless into distressed circumstances, which I had the pleasure of relieving, if I could not remove. His sense of gratitude was very strong, and showed itself oddly in one respect. He would never allow that I had a bad ear; but contended, that if I did not understand music, it was because I did not choose to learn it. But when he attended us in George's Square, our neighbor, Lady Cumming, sent to beg the boys might not be all flogged precisely at the same hour, as, though she had no doubt the punishment was deserved, the noise of the concord was really dreadful. Robert was the only one of our family who could sing, though my father was musical, and a performer on the violoncello at the *gentlemen's concerts.*—1826.

sort of club for introducing me about my seventeenth year into the society which at one time I had entirely dropped; for, from the time of my illness at college, I had had little or no intercourse with any of my class-companions, one or two only excepted. Now, however, about 1788, I began to feel and take my ground in society. A ready wit, a good deal of enthusiasm, and a perception that soon ripened into tact and observation of character, rendered me an acceptable companion to many young men whose acquisitions in philosophy and science were infinitely superior to anything I could boast.

In the business of these societies—for I was a member of more than one successively—I cannot boast of having made any great figure. I never was a good speaker, unless upon some subject which strongly animated my feelings; and, as I was totally unaccustomed to composition, as well as to the art of generalizing my ideas upon any subject, my literary essays were but very poor work. I never attempted them unless when compelled to do so by the regulations of the society, and then I was like the Lord of Castle Rackrent, who was obliged to cut down a tree to get a few faggots to boil the kettle; for the quantity of ponderous and miscellaneous knowledge which I really possessed on many subjects, was not easily condensed, or brought to bear upon the object I wished particularly to become master of. Yet there occurred opportunities when this odd lumber of my brain, especially that which was connected with the recondite parts of history, did me, as Hamlet says, "yeoman's service." My memory of events was like one of the large, old-fashioned stone-cannons of the Turks—very difficult to load well and discharge, but making a powerful effect when by good chance any object did come within range of its shot. Such fortunate opportunities of exploding with effect maintained my literary character among my companions, with whom I soon met with great indulgence and regard. The persons with whom I chiefly lived at this period of my youth were William Clerk, already mentioned; James Edmonstoune, of Newton; George Abercromby; Adam Fergusson, son of the celebrated Professor Fergusson, and who combined the lightest and most airy temper with the best and kindest disposition; John Irving, already mentioned; the Honorable Thomas Douglas, now Earl

of Selkirk; David Boyle,—and two or three others, who sometimes plunged deeply into politics and metaphysics, and not unfrequently "doffed the world aside, and bid it pass."

Looking back on these times, I cannot applaud in all respects the way in which our days were spent. There was too much idleness, and sometimes too much conviviality; but our hearts were warm, our minds honorably bent on knowledge and literary distinction; and if I, certainly the least informed of the party, may be permitted to bear witness, we were not without the fair and creditable means of attaining the distinction to which we aspired. In this society I was naturally led to correct my former useless course of reading; for—feeling myself greatly inferior to my companions in metaphysical philosophy and other branches of regular study—I labored, not without some success, to acquire at least such a portion of knowledge as might enable me to maintain my rank in conversation. In this I succeeded pretty well; but unfortunately then, as often since through my life, I incurred the deserved ridicule of my friends from the superficial nature of my acquisitions, which being, in the mercantile phrase, *got up* for society, very often proved flimsy in the texture; and thus the gifts of an uncommonly retentive memory and acute powers of perception were sometimes detrimental to their possessor, by encouraging him to a presumptuous reliance upon them.[13]

Amidst these studies, and in this society, the time of my apprenticeship elapsed; and in 1790, or thereabouts, it became necessary that I should seriously consider to which department of the law I was to attach myself. My father behaved with the most parental kindness. He offered, if I preferred his own profession, immediately to take me into partnership

[13] Scott was admitted into the most celebrated of the Edinburgh debating Societies, *The Speculative,* in January 1791. Soon after he was elected their librarian; and in the November following, he became also their secretary and treasurer:—all which appointments indicate the reliance placed on his careful habits of business, the fruit of his chamber education. The minutes kept in his hand-writing attest the strict regularity of his attention to the affairs of the club; but they show also, as do all his early letters, a strange carelessness in spelling. His constant good temper softened the asperities of debate, while his multifarious lore, and the quaint humor with which he enlivened its display, made him more a favorite as a speaker than some whose powers of rhetoric were far above his.—J. G. Lockhart.

with him, which, though his business was much diminished, still afforded me an immediate prospect of a handsome independence. But he did not disguise his wish that I should relinquish this situation to my younger brother, and embrace the more ambitious profession of the bar. I had little hesitation in making my choice—for I was never very fond of money; and in no other particular do the professions admit of a comparison. Besides, I knew and felt the inconveniences attached to that of a Writer; and I thought (like a young man) many of them were "ingenio non subeunda meo." The appearance of personal dependence which that profession requires was disagreeable to me; the sort of connection between the client and the attorney seemed to render the latter more subservient than was quite agreeable to my nature; and, besides, I had seen many sad examples, while overlooking my father's business, that the utmost exertions, and the best meant services, do not secure the *man of business,* as he is called, from great loss, and most ungracious treatment on the part of his employers. The bar, though I was conscious of my deficiencies as a public speaker, was the line of ambition and liberty; it was that also for which most of my contemporary friends were destined. And, lastly, although I would willingly have relieved my father of the labors of his business, yet I saw plainly we could not have agreed on some particulars if we had attempted to conduct it together, and that I should disappoint his expectations if I did not turn to the bar. So to that object my studies were directed with great ardor and perseverance during the years 1789, 1790, 1791, 1792.

In the usual course of study, the Roman or Civil Law was the first object of my attention—the second, the Municipal Law of Scotland. In the course of reading on both subjects, I had the advantage of studying in conjunction with my friend William Clerk, a man of the most acute intellect and powerful apprehension, and who, should he ever shake loose the fetters of indolence by which he has been hitherto trammeled, cannot fail to be distinguished in the highest degree. We attended the regular classes of both laws in the University of Edinburgh. The Civil Law chair, now worthily filled by Mr. Alexander Irving, might at that time be considered as in

abeyance, since the person by whom it was occupied had never been fit for the situation, and was then almost in a state of dotage. But the Scotch Law lectures were those of Mr. David Hume, who still continues to occupy that situation with as much honor to himself as advantage to his country. I copied over his lectures twice with my own hand, from notes taken in the class, and when I have had occasion to consult them, I can never sufficiently admire the penetration and clearness of conception which were necessary to the arrangement of the fabric of law, formed originally under the strictest influence of feudal principles, and innovated, altered, and broken in upon by the change of times, of habits, and of manners, until it resembles some ancient castle, partly entire, partly ruinous, partly dilapidated, patched and altered during the succession of ages by a thousand additions and combinations, yet still exhibiting, with the marks of its antiquity, symptoms of the skill and wisdom of its founders, and capable of being analyzed and made the subject of a methodical plan by an architect who can understand the various styles of the different ages in which it was subjected to alteration. Such an architect has Mr. Hume been to the law of Scotland, neither wandering into fanciful and abstruse disquisitions, which are the more proper subject of the antiquary, nor satisfied with presenting to his pupils a dry and undigested detail of the laws in their present state, but combining the past state of our legal enactments with the present, and tracing clearly and judiciously the changes which took place, and the causes which led to them.

Under these auspices, I commenced my legal studies. A little parlor was assigned me in my father's house, which was spacious and convenient, and I took the exclusive possession of my new realms with all the feelings of novelty and liberty. Let me do justice to the only years of my life in which I applied to learning with stern, steady, and undeviating industry. The rule of my friend Clerk and myself was, that we should mutually qualify ourselves for undergoing an examination upon certain points of law every morning in the week, Sundays excepted. This was at first to have taken place alternately at each other's houses, but we soon discovered that my friend's resolution was inadequate to severing him from his

couch at the early hour fixed for this exercitation. Accordingly, I agreed to go every morning to his house, which, being at the extremity of Prince's Street, New Town, was a walk of two miles. With great punctuality, however, I beat him up to his task every morning before seven o'clock, and in the course of two summers, we went, by way of question and answer, through the whole of Heineccius's Analysis of the Institutes and Pandects, as well as through the smaller copy of Erskine's Institutes of the Law of Scotland. This course of study enabled us to pass with credit the usual trials, which, by the regulations of the Faculty of Advocates, must be undergone by every candidate for admission into their body. My friend William Clerk and I passed these ordeals on the same days—namely, the Civil Law trial on the [30th June 1791], and the Scots Law trial on the [6th of July 1792]. On the [11th July 1792], we both assumed the gown with all its duties and honors.

My progress in life during these two or three years had been gradually enlarging my acquaintance, and facilitating my entrance into good company. My father and mother, already advanced in life, saw little society at home, excepting that of near relations, or upon particular occasions, so that I was left to form connections in a great measure for myself. It is not difficult for a youth with a real desire to please and be pleased, to make his way into good society in Edinburgh—or indeed anywhere; and my family connections, if they did not greatly further, had nothing to embarrass my progress. I was a gentleman, and so welcome anywhere, if so be I could behave myself, as Tony Lumpkin says, "in a concatenation accordingly."

END OF SCOTT'S UNFINISHED AUTOBIOGRAPHY

PRINCE VON METTERNICH

PRINCE VON METTERNICH

MOST RENOWNED OF AUSTRIAN DIPLOMATS, THE REAL RULER OF EUROPE FOR OVER THIRTY YEARS

1773-1859

(INTRODUCTORY NOTE)

Clemens von Metternich was the Austrian statesman who organized all Europe against Napoleon in 1813 and so brought about the downfall of the great French empire. It was also Metternich who chiefly directed the rearrangement of Europe in 1815, and who then, as the champion of autocracy against democracy, suppressed the uprisings of the common people everywhere through Europe. Under Metternich's shrewd guidance Austria thus became the chief state of Europe during the reactionary period between 1815 and 1848; and when in the latter year the peoples everywhere burst into revolt, Metternich had to flee from Vienna for his life. In the period of less autocratic government that followed, the aged Metternich took no part. Civilization had swept beyond the control of his diplomatic cleverness.

It is obvious that the account of his own life, from the pen of this the most prominent man of his period, must be a work of enormous value. It was most carefully prepared by him in the years between 1815 and 1844, and was entrusted to his son to be published after his death. It deals mainly with the period of his early successes and his great triumph against Napoleon, the theme upon which in his old age of retirement the rejected diplomat naturally loved best to dwell.

It was for his successes of 1813 that Metternich was made a Prince of the Austrian Empire. His family had always been among the aristocracy of the empire; and his sovereign had long before accepted him as the chief guide of the state. It was Metternich who arranged the marriage of Napoleon to the Austrian Princess, Maria Louise. He thus, among all the haughty Austrians, saw most clearly the necessity of compromise in order to save Austria. He made the proudest court in Europe bow humbly before the French "upstart" until the hour arrived when resistance might be successful.

MEMOIRS OF METTERNICH

I DEPOSIT this manuscript in the archives of my family, and I am led to do so by the following considerations:

My life belongs to the time in which it has passed.

That time is an epoch in the history of the world; it was a period of transition! In such periods the older edifice is already destroyed, though the new is not yet in existence; it has to be reared, and the men of the time build it.

Architects present themselves on all sides: not one, however, is permitted to see the work concluded; for that, the life of man is too short. Happy the man who can say of himself that he has not run counter to Eternal Laws. This testimony my conscience does not deny me.

I leave to those who come after me not a finished work, but a clew to guide them to the truth of what I intended and what I did not intend. Mindful of my duty to the State, I have inserted in this manuscript nothing belonging to its secrets; but many things which ought to be known, and which ought not to remain in obscurity.

I have especially desired to render a last service, the greatest I can render, to the dead: to make known, as he was, the Emperor Francis I., who in his last will has conferred on me the title of his best friend.

My life was full of action in a time of rapidly moving events. This narrative shows that from my earliest youth to the thirty-sixth year of a laborious ministry, when I write these lines, I have not lived one hour to myself.

A spectator of the order of things before the Revolution in French society, and an observer of or a participator in all the circumstances, which accompanied and followed the overthrow of that order, of all my contemporaries I now stand alone on the lofty stage on which neither my will nor my inclination placed me.

I acknowledge, therefore, the right and the duty to point out to my descendants, the course by which alone the conscientious man can withstand the storms of time. This course I have indicated by the motto I have chosen as the symbol of my conviction, for myself and my descendants: "TRUE STRENGTH LIES IN RIGHT"; save this, all is transitory.

The epoch which I have especially considered lies between 1810 and 1815; for that period was the most important in my life, as it was also in the history of the world. The direction was then given to the forms which things afterwards assumed. Proofs of this exist in the State Archives; but they contain only the results, and contribute little towards throwing light on the process by which those results were brought about; for in the years 1813, 1814 and 1815, the monarchs and the leaders of the Cabinets were mostly in the same locality.

If ever—and it is inevitable—an account of my life be given to the world, the statement of the truth concerning myself will furnish my descendants with the means of contradicting false representations. Investigation of the State Archives will also be required, containing as they do all that I did not think proper to include in this manuscript, and which I could not have included from want of time, even if a feeling of duty had not forbidden it.

The men who create History have not time to write it—I at least had none.

I have called the period between the years 1810 and 1815 the most important, because it includes the epoch in which Napoleon's attempt to establish a new order of things was overthrown; through which overthrow Europe fell under the natural consequences of the French Revolution—consequences which are only now beginning to develop themselves.

This manuscript is to remain in my family archives for ever, so far as that can be said of anything man intends. I permit it, however, to be used, according to time and circumstances, to fill up the defects in historical narratives, or to correct those which are untrue, whether in regard to facts or in regard to my own person.

METTERNICH.

December, 1844.

I—APPRENTICESHIP

I WAS born at Coblentz in the year 1773, so that my youth coincided with that period which immediately preceded the social Revolution in France, and which served as an introduction to it. Brought up in my father's house with loving care,

I grew up under the influences of the position in which I was born,—the public station of my father in the Imperial service, the French social life, and the moral laxity which characterized the smaller German States, before the storm burst forth which was soon afterwards to annihilate them.

At the time of my childhood the educational methods of Basedow and Campe were in vogue. My first tutor was an aged Piarist. When I was nine years old he died, and he was replaced by another priest, who taught me the *Humaniora* till my thirteenth year, when my father gave me another tutor. Friedrich Simon, born at Strasburg, and a Protestant, had been a teacher in Basedow's philanthropic institution at Dessau. He married a niece of Campe himself, and then, in connection with a Protestant clergyman, Schweighäuser, established an educational institution in Alsace, and afterwards undertook the direction of a similar institution at Neuwied on the Rhine.

Under the guidance of this tutor, I and my brother, who was a year and a half younger than myself, went through the studies of the Gymnasiums till the summer of the year 1788, when we were sent to the University of Strasburg.

This University at that time enjoyed great fame, and was much frequented by Germans, who went thither on account of the facilities it offered for acquiring the German and French languages. The year I went there the youthful Napoleon Bonaparte had just left; he concluded his studies in the artillery regiment quartered at Strasburg. We had the same professors for mathematics and fencing,—a circumstance which was only remembered by those masters when the little artillery officer became, step by step, a great general, First Consul, and afterwards Emperor. During my residence in Strasburg I never heard his name mentioned.[1] Prince Maximilian of Zweibrücken, afterwards the first King of Bavaria, was colonel of the royal Alsace regiment then quartered at Strasburg. My mother, who was intimate with the parents

[1] In passing through Strasburg in 1808, I had a visit from my old fencing-master, Mons. Fustet. "Is it not a strange thing,"—said he to me, "that it was my lot to give you fencing-lessons, just after I had given the like to Napoleon? I hope that my two pupils, the Emperor of the French and the Austrian Ambassador at Paris, will not take it into their heads to come to blows with each other."

of his wife, a princess of Hesse-Darmstadt, had recommended me to the care of this Prince. This charge he fulfilled in the most cordial manner, and throughout the whole life of this prince, relations of the utmost confidence existed between us, which were not without a certain influence on more than one public occasion.

I left the University of Strasburg in the year 1790, at the time of the coronation of the Emperor Leopold at Frankfort, whither my father had summoned me. The French Revolution was beginning. From that moment I was its close observer, and subsequently became its adversary; and so I have ever remained, without having been once drawn into its whirlpool. I have known men whose characters had not sufficient strength to withstand the misleading glare of innovations and theories, and who have reproached me that neither my understanding nor my conscience could sustain themselves at the tribunal of reason and of right. The errors into which these men fell, I ascribe far more to weakness of judgment than to the influence of evil example.

Contingencies which might have drawn me into the vortex were certainly not wanting. Between the years 1787 and 1790 I was placed under the direction of a tutor upon whose name the curses of Alsace fell; during the Reign of Terror he was a member of the revolutionary tribunal, over which Eulogius Schneider, a recreant monk from the diocese of Cologne, presided; and he shared in the responsibility of those streams of blood shed by that abhorred tribunal in that unhappy province. My religious teacher at Strasburg was Professor of Canon law at the university—and after adopting the civil constitution of the Clergy, had been elected Bishop of Strasburg. Afterwards he foreswore religion and the episcopate, and publicly burned the insignia of his office in a revolutionary orgy. I must do both these men the justice to state, that they never attempted to influence my opinions.

My tutor made himself notorious in Paris on that accursed day, August 10, 1792. It was he who presided over the Council of Ten, which the bandits, known as "The Marseillaise," had appointed to conduct the operations of the day. In 1806 I found the same man in Paris again; he was then teacher of the German language in the Collége Louis le Grand,

but he afterwards lost that place, being, like all the Jacobins of that time, in disfavor with Napoleon. On the return of the Bourbons, the Duke of Orleans made him German teacher to his children.

The doctrines of the Jacobins and their appeal to the passions of the people, excited in me an aversion, which age and experience have only strengthened. I cherish the conviction that I never should have been at any time, or in the lowest position, accessible to the temptations to which I saw so great a number of my contemporaries yield. I must also admit that the example of the errors, to which an unveracious spirit and the excitement of passion may lead, was not lost upon me; it influenced my own mind, and aided me to avoid the errors into which many fell, only because they had not had the same opportunities of beholding such enormities.

As I have already said, I went to Frankfort in the year 1790, for the coronation of the Emperor Leopold, where my father was Austrian Ambassador. I was chosen by the Catholic Imperial Courts of the Westphalian Bench to be master of the ceremonies, and I had as colleague, for the Protestant section of the same Bench, Count Friedrich v. Solms-Laubach.

I had only then attained my seventeenth year, and was much flattered by this mark of confidence from so honorable a corporation, functions being assigned to me which, from their important character, seemed to require a man of riper years.

It was in Frankfort that I first came into personal contact with the Archduke, who became afterwards Emperor of Germany under the title of Francis II., and then Emperor of Austria under that of Francis I. He was five years older than I, and had just married his second wife, a Neapolitan princess. On the occasion of the coronation I also made the acquaintance of many eminent persons belonging to the Imperial court and to the best society of Vienna. Although the son of the Emperor's ambassador, I had never yet been in Austria. The only spot of hereditary property on which I had set my foot was the estate of Königswart, where, in the year 1786, owing to the death of Frederic II., I had resided for a short time. In fact, this event recalled my father from

his post of Plenipotentiary to the three Rhenish electorates.

The coronation of a Roman emperor at Frankfort was certainly one of the most impressive and splendid spectacles in the world. Everything, down to the most trifling details, spoke to the mind and heart through the force of tradition and the bringing together of so much splendor. Yet a painful feeling overshadowed the marvelous picture then presented by the city of Frankfort. A conflagration, which grew with each day, laid waste the neighboring kingdom. Thoughtful men already saw the influence which this must, sooner or later, exercise beyond the boundaries of France. Emigrants also began to pour into the heart of an empire which had for so many centuries served as a wall of defense against a movement whose origin must be sought for long before the outbreak of 1789; and this defensive power itself, too, was already in a condition of evident decay. My mind was then too young to be able to fathom the vicissitudes of that gloomy future; absorbed in the present, I saw only, with all the force of youthful impressions, the contrast between the country contaminated by Jacobinism, and the country where human grandeur was united with a noble national spirit. Surrounded by a number of dull spectators, who called themselves the people, I had been present at the plundering of the Stadthaus at Strasburg, perpetrated by a drunken mob, which considered itself the people. Now I found myself one of the guardians of public order in a Stadthaus, where so many impressive ceremonies had taken place, and this at so short a distance from the great state now in conflagration. I repeat it, that I thought only of this contrast, full of faith in a future which, in my young dreams, was to seal the triumph of this mighty organization over all weakness and error. I slept close to a volcano, without thinking of any eruption of lava!

It was towards the end of the residence of the Imperial court in Frankfort that the Emperor Leopold II. conferred on my father the then very important position of Minister Plenipotentiary to the States-General of the Austrian Netherlands. This title, borrowed from the diplomatic career, incorrectly described the functions of the office, the true attributes of which would have been better characterized, if he had been called Prime Minister of the States-General. The

popular rising, in which such worthless men as the advocate Vandernoot and a priest of the name of Van Gupen had played so lamentable a part, had just been put down. Following the advice of Prince Kaunitz, who knew his calm wisdom and conciliatory character, my father had been chosen by the Emperor to carry out the moral pacification of those provinces, and this he succeeded in doing, assisted by the repeal of the reforms so unwisely attempted by Emperor Joseph II.

From Frankfort I went to the University of Mayence, to study Law. My brother, from whom I had never yet been separated, had been, from 1787, placed with me under the care of a clerical tutor, who was an upright, discreet man, and a witness of the errors into which my Jacobin teacher had fallen. I had now concluded my nineteenth year, and, strictly speaking, had no longer a tutor, for my tutor became my friend and counselor. My residence in Mayence was of the greatest use to me, and had a decided influence on my life. My time was divided between my studies and intercourse with a society as distinguished for intellectual superiority as for the social position of its members. At that time Mayence and Brussels were the *rendezvous* for French emigrants of the higher classes, whose exile was voluntary, not forced as it soon afterwards became, and who had not as yet to struggle with poverty. In my intercourse with the *élite* of this society, I learned to know the defects of the old *régime;* the occurrences, too, of each day taught me, into what crimes and absurdities a nation necessarily falls, when it undermines the foundations of the social edifice. I learned to estimate the difficulty of erecting a society on new foundations, when the old are destroyed. In this way also I came to know the French; I learned to understand them, and to be understood by them.

I spent the vacation in the bosom of my family at Brussels, whither my father had summoned me, that I might work in his department. The post of Minister to the States-General was, of all the places which the Emperor had to bestow, the most important, and at the same time, one of the most laborious. The minister united in his own person the chief direction of all the branches of a substantive government. A numerous diplomatic corps resided at Brussels, the minister, therefore, found himself at the head of a political cabinet. The country

had just passed through an internal crisis, the consequences of which were still felt in all directions, so that my position gave me the opportunity to observe and study at the same time two countries, one of which was given up to the horrors of the Revolution, whilst the other still showed fresh traces of what it had gone through. This position and the instruction I gained from it have not been lost on me in the long course of my public life.

With the scenes of devastation before me of which France was the theater, my mind naturally turned towards every study which promised to be most useful in my future career. I felt that the Revolution would be the adversary I should have to fight, and therefore I set myself to study the enemy and know my way about his camp. I attended the lectures on Law, and came in contact with professors and students of all shades. As in all German universities, the spirit of innovation developed itself in Mayence. The progress of events in France inflamed this disposition. I was surrounded by students, who named the lectures according to the Republican calendar; and some professors, especially a certain Hofman, who at that time (1792) was head of one of the clubs at Mayence, made it their business to interlard their lectures with allusions to the emancipation of the human race, as it was so well begun by Marat and Robespierre. George Forster, the learned companion of the famous navigator James Cook in his voyages, then living there, gathered round him numerous acolytes of the Revolution. I visited at his house, and saw the effect of the seductive principles to which many youthful minds fell victim. Kotzebue, the dramatist, was also living at Mayence at that time; he was then an ardent follower of a school which, twenty-five years later, turned their daggers against him.

From this epoch date the relations between me and the historian Nicolas Vogt, whose remains are buried on the Johannisberg. I attended his lectures on the History of the German Empire; and whether he guessed how much help I should afterwards obtain from his lectures, or whether from the force of sympathy between us, I always reckoned him among the number of my most zealous friends. Often have I recalled the saying with which he concluded a discussion

between us on the subject of historical criticism:—"Your intellect and your heart are on the right road; persevere therein also in practical life, the lessons of History will guide you. Your career, however long it may be, will not enable you to see the end of the conflagration which is destroying the great neighboring kingdom. If you do not wish to expose yourself to reproaches, never leave the straight path. You will see many so-called great men pass by you with swift strides; let them pass, but do not deviate from your path. You will overtake them, if only because you must meet them on their way back!" The good man was right.

In July 1792, I was present at the coronation of the Emperor Francis, and then performed the same duties as at that of his illustrious predecessor.

The appearance which Frankfort then presented was very different from that of this city two years earlier. France was now bowed beneath the Reign of Terror. Events followed each other in quick succession. The comparison between what was going on in Frankfort and what was taking place in the neighboring kingdom was too striking to escape notice, and could not but be painfully evident to the mind.

The light-heartedness which characterized the French emigrants assembled in the city for the coronation was in strong contrast with this impression. The princes of the royal family were all gathered together at Coblentz. All who fled from the Revolution reckoned on their exile lasting for two months. Thoughtful men glanced at the Prussian army assembled on the Rhine, and at the war which had already broken out in Belgium, Austria, and France.

Among the personages who greatly attracted my attention in Frankfort, I may mention the Abbé Maury, who officiated here as Papal Nuncio, and Vicomte de Mirabeau, known by the *sobriquet* of Mirabeau-Tonneau, the younger brother of the famous Mirabeau: a man of spirit and great courage, just as enthusiastic in his loyalty as his brother was revolutionary. In the Abbé Maury I did not recognize the fearless deputy of the National Assembly, and for this reason, doubtless, I was the less surprised to meet him a year afterwards as Cardinal and almoner to Princess Pauline Borghese, Napoleon's sister.

In regard to the circumstances, the pageant and ceremonies of this coronation were perhaps of a more imposing character than at the former. Prince Anton Esterhazy, the principal Ambassador of the Emperor, intrusted me in the most friendly manner with the direction of the banquet which he gave after the coronation. I opened the ball with the young Princess Louise of Mecklenberg, who afterwards, as Queen of Prussia, was distinguished for her beauty and noble qualities. She was two years younger than I. We had known each other from childhood, for these young Princesses of Mecklenberg, of whom one was Queen of Prussia and the other Queen of Hanover, were brought up at Darmstadt under the care of their grandmother, who was on intimate terms with my mother. The most friendly relations existed between us during the whole life of that princess.

When the coronation was over, the monarch and most of the German princes departed to Mayence, where the Elector held his court in great luxury, this court being at that time the most luxurious in Germany. The French princes had arrived, everything was ready for the beginning of the campaign. Great hopes were placed on the result, and certain victory was generally expected. The French emigrants thought the undertaking sure of success, and the only complaint they were heard to utter related to unavoidable delays in the assembling of the army. According to their idea, the dispatch of a few battalions only was needed, in order that the white flag should immediately appear on all the towers of France.

No doubt these lofty delusions brought about the defeat which the Prussian army soon afterwards sustained.

From Mayence I went to Coblentz, to which place the French princes returned. The Prussian army had encamped near the village of Metternich, which lies a mile (German) distant from the town. There for the first time I came to know the Crown Prince of Prussia, who, after the death of King Frederick William II., mounted the throne.

Frederick William II. was the picture of a king. In stature he was almost a giant, and stout in proportion. In all assemblies he stood a head taller than the crowd. His manners were stately and pleasant. The emigrants were cer-

tain that he had only to show himself on the frontiers, and the *sans-culottes* would lay down their arms. Frenchmen of that day did not at all comprehend the Revolution; and, indeed, I do not believe that, with a few exceptions, they ever succeeded in doing so. But this weakness is not the exclusive property of the French, for people in general do not even guess the true causes or the purpose of events which take place before their eyes.

Soon after this, the campaign commenced and dispelled all these dreams. Defective in organization, and conducted by a man whose military reputation was founded simply on a flattering speech of Frederick II., it ended in a calamitous retreat. All that I afterwards was able to discover about this campaign left me no doubt whatever that, if the Duke of Brunswick, instead of losing time in Champagne, had marched straight to Paris, he would have effected an entrance into that city. What would have been the consequence of such a success, it is difficult to determine; but for my part, I feel convinced that the Revolution would not have been suppressed. Apart from the fact that the military power was too weak to maintain the first success, the evil had spread to an extent too vast to be restrained in its onward steps by merely military operations, and Europe was the victim of so many illusions beyond the range of the Revolution that moral remedies could not keep pace with the power of the sword. In the latter part of the summer I went to Brussels. The war was at its height. My university studies were interrupted in consequence of these events. I passed to and fro between Brussels and the army, sometimes with commissions from my father, sometimes to visit my friends. On one of these occasions, as I was returning to Brussels, an adjutant of the general in command came to inform my father that the commander of the French army, General Dumouriez, had just seized the commissaries of the Convention, and sent them to the Austrian outposts. I was deputed to receive them on their arrival at Brussels. I had many interviews with them in the prisons which were assigned to them, and heard their complaints against the general, whom they had been ordered to remove and imprison. Shortly after this, we saw General Dumouriez himself arrive in the Netherlands. The French Reign of

Terror destroyed its own commanders just as cartridges destroyed the soldiers. The execution of Louis XVI. and of Marie Antoinette had called forth beyond the confines of France, and especially in our army, a horror which soon passed into implacable hatred, and for some weeks our troops, in spite of the efforts of the officers, gave no quarter in battle.

The campaign of the year 1793 concluded with the capture of Valenciennes. I was present at almost all the operations of the siege, and had therefore the opportunity of observing war very closely; and it is to be wished that all those who are called upon to take a leading part in the business of the State could learn in the same school. In the course of my long public life I have often had reason to congratulate myself upon the experience thus gained.

I passed the winter of 1793-1794 in the Netherlands, continuing the studies of the service for which I was destined, and being employed in the business of the Cabinet. Brussels was full of strangers, and the emigrants continued to dream of the end of their exile with a confidence which I was far from sharing.

Towards the end of the winter, Vicomte Desandroins, chief treasurer of the Netherlands Government, was entrusted with a mission to the English Government. I accompanied him to London, and was there received by King George III. with unusual kindness and affability. The relations between the Imperial Court and that of Great Britain were most confidential, and public feeling manifested itself in both countries with the same energy against the horrors of the French Revolution, as indeed their interests seemed to be identical. I thus paid a visit to England under the happiest auspices, and my residence there brought me into contact with the most remarkable men of this great epoch. In this way I came to know William Pitt, Charles Fox, Burke, Sheridan, Charles Grey (afterwards Lord Grey), and many other personages, who then and afterwards played great parts on the theater of public life. I frequented the sittings of Parliament as much as possible, and followed with particular attention the famous trial of Mr. Hastings. I endeavored to acquaint myself thoroughly with the mechanism of the Parliament, and

this was not without use in my subsequent career. I was then appointed Ambassador Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary of the Emperor at the Hague. This circumstance, being known in London, procured me admission to a sphere of society generally unapproachable for a young man of one-and-twenty. I came to know the Prince of Wales, afterwards Regent, then at last King, with the title of George IV. Our relations, begun at this time, lasted during the prince's whole life. Great dissensions at this period divided the Royal family of England. The Prince of Wales had taken up the side of the Opposition. My youth restrained me from expressing the profound disapproval which his conduct produced in me; but I took one day the opportunity of saying a word to him on the subject, of which he reminded me thirty years afterwards, and added these words, "You were very right then!"

The Prince of Wales was one of the handsomest men I ever saw, and to an agreeable exterior he added the most charming manners. He possessed a sound intelligence, which alone preserved him from being corrupted by the bad society in which he moved with ease himself, without ever permitting the slightest want of respect in others. He took a great fancy to me, and was pleased, I think, at my reserve in a society which was not agreeable to me.

The war between France and England had meantime broken out, and the moment now drew near when the naval strength of the two powers was to be measured against each other. Several hundred merchant vessels, bound for the East and West Indies, waited in the roads at Spithead and St. Helen's for the opportunity to set sail. A great fleet of men-of-war was to protect the merchantmen from an attack, for which great naval preparations had been made in the harbor of Brest. I eagerly desired to see the sailing of the fleet. When the King heard of this, he was kind enough to order that everything should be done to facilitate the execution of my purpose; and one day when I waited on him, he told me he would let me know when to go to Portsmouth to be present at the departure of the fleet, and would give the necessary directions to Admiral Howe and the harbor-master to secure the gratification of my curiosity. Shortly afterwards his Majesty

sent to inform me that the moment for my departure was come, and furnished with letters to the above-named officers, I traveled to Portsmouth. This town was so full of sightseers that, but for the attention of the naval officers, who had secured lodgings for me, no such accommodation would have been found. The day after my arrival I paid the harbor-master a visit, and went on board the admiral's ship, to present the letters with which I had been provided. The admiral received me with the greatest politeness, and assured me he would have me informed the moment the fleet was ready to sail.

I spent three days at Portsmouth, in visiting the different establishments in that town, and in the night of the third day I was awakened by news brought by an officer sent by Admiral Howe, that he had instructions to conduct me to the Isle of Wight. From the top of the hill behind Cowes, we could see the fleets leave the roads and join company on the other side of the island, on the south of which a vessel was stationed for my use, in order to convey me to the admiral's ship. We left Portsmouth immediately, and landed on the Isle of Wight in the early morning, reaching our point of observation about six o'clock in the morning. A fresh breeze sprang up, and this was the signal for the departure of more than four hundred ships. I consider this the most beautiful sight I have ever seen, I might say, indeed, the most beautiful that human eyes have ever beheld! At a signal from the admiral's ship the merchantmen unfurled their sails, the fleet for the West Indies turned to the west, the fleet for the East Indies passed to the east side of the island, each accompanied with a portion of the royal fleet. Hundreds of vessels and boats, filled with spectators, covered the two roads as far as the eye could reach, in the midst of which the great ships followed one another, in the same manner as we see great masses of troops moved on the parade ground. Four French men-of-war, coming from Toulon, with emigrants on board, hoisted the white flag and joined the English fleet. This circumstance, unparalleled in the annals of history, gave a character to the occurrence which will never fade from the memory of those who witnessed it. In a few hours the two fleets met to the south of the island. As soon as my guide

gave the signal for departure, we descended the hill and joined Admiral Howe on board the "Queen Charlotte." I remained with the admiral, who loaded me with attentions, till the evening of May 30.

A dispatch boat sent from the English fleet of observation before Brest brought the news that the French fleet had set sail and put out to sea. In spite of my earnest petitions to the admiral to allow me to remain to see the great events which were imminent, he obliged me to leave him: "The King told me," said he, "to let you see everything; but I have to send you back alive, and cannot take upon myself to expose you to the dangers of a sea-fight." With the greatest regret, therefore, I left the fleet, and went on board the vessel which the admiral was sending off to Portsmouth with his dispatches to the Admiralty; and after a few days' stay in Portsmouth, I returned to London. The city I found illuminated, and the people filled with rapture at the news of the great naval victory of the 1st of June off Ushant. This news preceded me by a few hours only. I remained in London two days; and on the third I traveled back to Portsmouth, to see the arrival of the fleet with their prizes.

The admiral's ship, which I had left a few days before in the most perfect condition, was one of those which suffered the most severely. She had joined battle with the French admiral's ship, and presented the appearance of a ruin; the greater part of her crew had been killed or disabled. Admiral Howe, who to my great joy escaped unhurt, returned covered with laurels.

I was to have returned to the Netherlands in the middle of summer, but the war prevented me; and while waiting to see how events would turn out, I visited the interior of England. At the commencement of the autumn, as the enemy had entered the Netherlands, I embarked at Harwich to cross over to Helvoetsluys. We were overtaken by a heavy gale, which drove us into the roads of Dunquerque, just as that town was being bombarded by Sir Sidney Smith. I was exposed to a cross fire for more than two hours, and had only to thank a sudden change of wind for my escape from so dangerous a position. From this circumstance a report was started and disseminated by the newspapers of the day that I had been

taken prisoner by the French. This false report reached the ears of my father, and he, with the commander-in-chief of the Austrian army, was just on the point of approaching the French Government with regard to my liberation, when he heard of my landing in Holland. I remained in this country so long as was necessary to enable me to visit the Hague, Amsterdam, and part of North Holland, and from thence I repaired to the seat of government of the Netherlands on the Lower Rhine, to which place it had retired.

In the beginning of October I traveled with my father to Vienna, and visited that capital for the first time. In the month of February of the same year Prince Kaunitz died, and the direction of foreign affairs was entrusted to Baron von Thugut. I had made his acquaintance in Brussels, where he passed several months with Count Mercy d'Argenteau, who lived in the Belgian capital after his return from his post of ambassador in Paris. I have already mentioned that I had been chosen for the mission to the Hague; but after the conquest of Holland by Pichegru's army, it did not suit me to take that post, and I waited the development of events, without impatience, but with a feeling of bitterness against the Revolution the consequences of which threatened the whole body of society. The left bank of the Rhine was occupied by the troops of the French Republic. Those were to blame for this blow who had so utterly mistaken the strength and extent of the Revolution. The greater part of our family estates lying on the left bank of the Rhine had been confiscated by the *great nation;* it was necessary, therefore, to turn to the estates we had in Bohemia, which had brought in but little to my father, or his predecessors during the last century, but which had now to be made the most of. My father sent me thither in order to carry out the necessary measures on the spot. I spent the months of November and December alone in Königswart, and occupied myself with the management of the affairs entrusted to me.

On my return to Vienna, I found my parents busy with a project for my marriage. Prince Ernst Kaunitz, eldest son of the chancellor, had an only daughter; he had become acquainted with me during my first short residence in Vienna. Preliminary conferences between the parents made the con-

clusion of the marriage dependent on the mutual inclinations of the young people. I was only one-and-twenty, and the thought of marrying so young had never occurred to me. It was soon evident to me that my parents much desired this marriage; but as the Princess Kaunitz shortly afterwards had an illness, from which she only recovered in March 1795, I did not make the acquaintance of my bride-elect till the summer, and our betrothal was arranged to take place in the autumn of the same year.

Prince Ernst Kaunitz loved his daughter tenderly, and was determined not to part with her, so that I consented that we should live with him. The betrothal was celebrated on September 27, 1795, at Austerlitz, the place which ten years afterwards became so sadly famous.

I have already said that the public service presented no attractions for me. I had determined to remain in private life, and to devote my time to the cultivation of learning and science. At the time of which I speak fortune seemed to favor my inclinations, and I made a plan for myself, which I was not permitted to carry out.

I must also acquaint my readers with other causes which kept me aloof from public affairs. Still young, and placed in a position which allowed me to observe, from the highest point of view, the course of the greatest events, I found that they were not conducted as they ought to have been. *"Les affaires ce sont les hommes;"* affairs are only the expression of the faculties or the weaknesses of men, of their inclinations and their errors, their virtues and their vices. Inaccessible to prejudice, and seeking only the truth in everything, my modesty did not allow me to find fault with persons in power if I was not satisfied with what I saw; on the contrary, I ascribed to the weakness of my own understanding and to my inexperience the feeling which forced me to disapprove of the course they had taken. But neither inclination nor duty led me to acquire the necessary experience. My particular vocation seemed to me to be the cultivation of knowledge, especially of the exact and physical Sciences, which suited my taste particularly. I loved the fine arts too, so that nothing aroused in me any desire to put my freedom into fetters. The diplomatic career might certainly flatter my ambition,

but during all my life I have never been accessible to this feeling.

In the autumn of 1797, death carried off my father-in-law. Home duties and study continued to be my occupation. I diligently attended lectures on Geology, Chemistry, and Physics; then too, as afterwards, I followed with attention the progress of Medical Science. Man and his life seemed to me to be objects worthy of study. Vienna had for many years been rich in great physicians. Van Swieten and Stoll were dead; the first professorial chair was filled by Peter Franck; Quarin did honor to science by his extensive knowledge; Gall continued his lectures to a select audience; Jacquin was continually making fresh advances in botany. I was happy in this scientific circle, and allowed the Revolution to rage and rave without feeling any call to contend with it. It pleased Providence afterwards to rule quite otherwise.

The Congress of Rastadt drew me out of my retirement. The Counts of the Westphalian "Collegium" entrusted me with the care of their interests. I undertook the charge, more from a feeling of duty than in the hope of being able to serve a body whose existence was threatened, as was that of the German Empire itself. I remained in Rastadt till the middle of March 1799. As the dissolution of the Congress approached, I took my wife and daughter back to Vienna. A short time after my return to this capital, I learned the catastrophe which signalized the end of a Congress which, from beginning to end, had been but a phantom. I had no opportunity at that time of seeing Bonaparte. He had left Rastadt two days before my father and I arrived. In their respective capacities of First Plenipotentiary of the Empire and of the French Republic, my father and Bonaparte had their apartments in the Palace of the city, separated only by the great saloon.

Returning home, I again resumed my own manner of life and my accustomed employments. My stay in Rastadt only strengthened me in my opposition to a career which in no wise satisfied my mind and disposition. The French Revolution had reached and passed the climax of its barbarous follies; the Republic was only the miserable dregs of it; and a disunited Germany was paralyzed by the peace which Prussia

had separately concluded with France at Basle, and by the system of neutrality at any price, which the Princes of North Germany had adopted. Austria alone was in the field, and the war was badly carried on. Was there anything in such a situation to summon me to exchange my peaceful life for a life of activity constrained to move within limits conflicting with my spirit of independence and cramping my conscience?

These feelings of mine might easily give the impression that my temper had become morose. But that would be a mistake. I was preserved from this weakness by my love for grave studies. I never shut myself up from the world; my life was that of a man who sought exclusively good society; this alone had any power of attraction for me. The day was usually given entirely up to business, and the evening was divided between work and recreation. I frequented those *salons* by preference in which I was sure to find pleasant conversation, convinced that such conversation serves to sharpen the intellect, correct the judgment, and is a source of instruction to those who know how to keep it from degenerating into mere babbling.

At that time there were in Vienna several foreigners remarkable for their intellectual gifts; among whom I may particularly mention Pozzo di Borgo, who afterwards played a great part in public affairs. He was at that time employed as a secret agent by the English Cabinet. I met him often in society. I remarked in him an extraordinary fluency combined with southern warmth in expressing his feelings. One *salon,* with which, however, I had only a distant connection, was that of the Prince de Ligne's. The Prince himself was conspicuous for the peculiar quickness of his intellect; and his *salon* was frequented by a very mixed company, of whom the greater part affected the reputation of wits, without being particularly intellectual. For many years the Prince had honored me with especial kindness. During my residence in the Netherlands he had wished to bestow on me his second daughter in marriage, and used to call me his son-in-law, a name which he continued to give me in joke as long as he lived. The conquest of the Netherlands brought the Prince and his family from Brussels to Vienna. By a strange caprice of fortune, the Prince's daughter, who had been destined

for me, married a Count Pallfy, who had been at one time engaged to marry the very daughter of Prince Kaunitz, who became my wife.

The house which I most frequented was that of the Princess Liechtenstein, an aunt of my wife on the mother's side, and one of those five princesses who for many years were the intimate friends of the Emperor Joseph II. This small circle, known during the reign of this monarch by the name of "the Society of Princesses," consisted of Princess Franz Liechtenstein, Princess Ernest Kaunitz and her sister, Princess Karl Liechtenstein, and the Princesses Kinsky and Clary. Of men, besides the Emperor Joseph, there were Marshal Lascy, Lord-in-waiting, Count, afterwards Prince, Rosenberg, and the Prince de Ligne. After the death of the Emperor, this society was dispersed. The Princess Karl gathered round her the remains of this circle of all that Vienna possessed of persons distinguished for their agreeable manners. The Countess Rombec too, sister of Count Ludwig Cobenzl, then ambassador at St. Petersburg, opened her *salon;* which was much frequented by foreigners and especially by French emigrants.

I had arranged to pass the winter in the capital, and the summer months in the country, sometimes in Moravia on an estate belonging to my wife, sometimes in Bohemia on one belonging to my family. I had entirely withdrawn myself from public affairs, and in regard to them I was simply a spectator. The result of my observations was not favorable to the cause which all my life I had considered that of reason and right. From time to time I visited Baron Thugut, who in his capacity of Minister of Foreign Affairs conducted the affairs of the Imperial Chancellerie.

I have already mentioned our previous acquaintance. I made no attempt to come into closer intimacy with him; nothing urged me to it, for I wanted no place, and Baron Thugut had no relations, beyond his official duties, with any one. I agreed with him in his principles, but not with the manner in which he carried them out, and the results of his ministry have proved only too thoroughly that I was right.

Sometimes I waited on the Emperor, who let no opportunity slip of reproaching me with what he called my indolence. One day when I had been speaking of my views on this subject,

he said to me, "You live as I should be very happy to live in your place! Hold yourself ready for my orders, that is all I expect of you for the present."

II—ENTRANCE INTO POLITICAL LIFE

With the conclusion of the Peace of Luneville (1801) the weakness and vacillations of the Austrian Cabinet reached their height. During a conflict of ten years the policy of the Imperial court had raised a barrier, sometimes stronger, sometimes weaker, to the destructive principles of all the Governments of France which had succeeded one another since 1792. But the opposition so offered, betrayed only too much the utter want of consistency of plan. In this lay the great defect of the Cabinet, to whom also it has been ascribed, that the successes achieved one day were destroyed on the next. More than to all other causes, France owed her enormous successes to the inconsistent action of the ministries who conducted affairs from the death of the great statesman who for forty years presided over the cabinet of Vienna, but who, alas! had latterly suffered from the infirmities of age. The views upon which the policy of Austria was always based could not be conceived more clearly than they were, but never was their execution more feebly carried out.

The ministry of Baron Thugut displays nothing but an unbroken series of mistakes and miscalculations. When he was at the height of his power, he was distrusted by two parties, each from its own standpoint, in exactly opposite directions. He was accused by the one of having sold himself to France; others pretended that England had him in her pocket. It is to be deplored, both for his own sake and for Austria's, that no one has ventured to assert that Thugut had served the interests of his country and not his own.

Although we never attributed the political attitude of Thugut to foreign influence, it never occurred to us to trace it to treachery, which is always the most dangerous and generally a precarious means of success.

Sprung from a mean condition, the son of a mariner at Linz, Thugut was educated in the Oriental Academy, and trained for subordinate service in the state. Subtle and dexterous, he owed the success of his political career

to these qualities, which, when supported by deep dissimulation and a love of intrigue, pass only too easily for real talents.

He had invested the greater part of the property which he had acquired at Constantinople in the French funds, and without doubt it was anxiety for the preservation of this property which at the time of the outbreak of the Revolution blinded him, or at least kept him inactive. Then it was that the suspicion arose in the English party that he had been gained over to France. When however the Reign of Terror destroyed every spark of hope of saving even the smallest portion of his property from the general bankruptcy, Thugut, less restrained, changed his policy; hence it came about that the public, observing this change, took up the idea that it had been brought about by English gold.

Not without talent, robed in the highest dignity of the state, living in the obscurity of retirement and yet with cold and calculating ambition interfering with all the branches of the government, Thugut was inaccessible to bribery and corruption. The history of his ministry may be summed up in a series of miscalculations, all of which contributed to support and advance the preponderance of France.

In consequence of the Peace of Luneville Thugut retired from the public service. Count Cobenzl was recalled from St. Petersburg, and appointed to the direction of Foreign Affairs. The first Lord-in-waiting, Count, afterwards Prince, Trautmannsdorf, held the portfolio provisionally. The peace with France necessarily gave a new impulse to Austrian diplomacy.

The posts in London, Berlin, and St. Petersburg were already filled. There were ambassadors at Stockholm, and some of the smaller courts of Germany and Italy. The Emperor felt it necessary to fill up the gaps which Thugut, according to the custom which he sometimes carried too far, had left open. Occupied solely with the war against the French Revolution, Thugut paid no attention to anything that did not seem to him immediately connected with that war. Hence it happened that he did not read and consequently did not answer the dispatches of embassies of the second rank. When removed from the Ministry, a commission had to be appointed

to open and place in the archives hundreds of the reports and letters sent from such embassies.

A few days after he had taken office, Count Trautmannsdorf summoned me to him, and informed me that the Emperor, when he resolved to fill up the places mentioned above, had ordered him to give me the choice between the post at Dresden or Copenhagen, or to remain at home as Minister for Bohemia to the German Reichstag. I begged him to allow me to think over the matter, and betook myself to the Emperor. I laid before his Majesty openly my ideas as to my future life, and the talents I believed myself to possess, and those which I could not lay claim to. The Emperor received my professions with his accustomed kindness; but when he appealed to my patriotism, I yielded to his will. "Your Majesty," said I, "desires that I should enter a sphere for which I believe I have no vocation; I submit to your commands. I pray your Majesty never to doubt my will, but to distrust my capabilities. I will make the experiment, and your Majesty will permit me to retire from the service when, as I fear, the day comes that I shall not answer your expectations." The Emperor answered with a smile: "He who cherishes such fears is not in danger of injuring the public service. I promise you to be the first to tell you if I find you on the wrong road."

I decided for the embassy in Dresden. Denmark seemed to me too remote, and it was repugnant to me to go to Regensburg only to witness the obsequies of the noble German Empire. Dresden, on the contrary, one stage on the way to Berlin or St. Petersburg, I valued as a post of observation which might be made useful. Having been constrained to adopt this career, I desired at any rate to have the prospect of being useful. I could never do anything by halves; once a diplomatist, I determined to be one thoroughly, and in the sense which I connected with diplomacy. Subsequent events showed that I reckoned rightly, for, the path once entered, events hurried me along it only too swiftly.

Here, at the commencement of the account of my public life, I propose to admit into the narrative only what relates to myself, or rather what may serve to fill up the gaps in the official correspondence; for although the latter alone gives a true picture of the work of a statesman, yet in such docu-

ments many details find no place. I wish that those of my readers who may be in a position to have access to the Imperial archives may consult the documents of the time in connection with the present work; and, drawing from this double source, they will more easily appreciate the great epoch during which destiny had laid upon me the difficult task of playing an active part on the world's stage. But before I relate the many remarkable occurrences which have signalized my career, I will candidly state the principles on which the actions of my political life have been based. This statement will serve to clear up many points in the history of my time and explain my own actions.

That a public career was distasteful to me I have already mentioned. Convinced that every one ought to be prepared to answer for the deeds of his own life; penetrated by the consciousness of the enormous difficulties of propping up a society which was falling to pieces on every side; disapproving, before the tribunal of my own conscience, of almost all the measures which I saw adopted for the salvation of the social body, undermined as it was, by the errors of the eighteenth century; lastly, too diffident to believe that my mind was of so powerful a stamp that it could improve whatever it undertook: I had determined not to appear on a stage on which the independence of my character rebelled against playing a subordinate part, though I did not consider myself capable of taking the part of a reformer.

The care with which my education had been directed to the wide field of politics had early accustomed me to contemplate its vast extent. I soon remarked that my mode of thinking of the nature and dignity of this sphere was essentially different from the point of view from which all this was regarded by the enormous majority of those who are called to play great political parts. Here I may be allowed to propound the few principles to which I have always reduced the science commonly known by the name of Politics and Diplomacy.

Politics is the science of the vital interests of states. Since, however, an isolated state no longer exists, and is found only in the annals of the heathen world, or in the abstractions of so-called philosophers, we must always view the society of

nations as the essential condition of the present world. Thus, then, each state, besides its separate interests, has also those which are common to it with other states. The great axioms of political science proceed from the knowledge of the true political interests of all states. In these general interests lies the guarantee of their existence, while individual interests to which the transitory political movements of the day assign a great importance, and the care of which constitutes political wisdom in the eyes of a restless and short-sighted policy, possess only a relative and secondary value. History teaches us that whenever the separate come into conflict with the general interests of a state, and the latter are neglected or mistaken in the zealous and extensive prosecution of the former, this is to be regarded as an exceptional or unhealthy condition, whose development or speedy amendment ultimately decides the destiny of the state, that is, its impending decline or its recuperative prosperity. That which characterizes the modern world, and essentially distinguishes it from the ancient, is the tendency of nations to draw near to each other, and in some fashion to enter into a social league, which rests on the same basis with the great human society developed in the bosom of Christianity. This foundation consists of the precept of the Book of books, "Do unto others as ye would they should do unto you." This fundamental rule of every human fraternity, applied to the state, means in the political world reciprocity, and its effect is what in the language of diplomacy is called *bons procédés,* in other words, mutual consideration and honorable conduct. In the ancient world, policy isolated itself entirely, and exercised the most absolute selfishness, without any other curb than that of prudence. The law of retaliation set up eternal barriers and founded eternal enmities between the societies of men; and upon every page of ancient history is found the principle of mutual evil for evil. Modern history, on the other hand, exhibits the principle of the solidarity of nations and of the balance of power, and furnishes the spectacle of the combined endeavors of several states against the temporary predominance of any one to impede the extension of this principle, and to constrain it to return to the common law. The establishment of international relations upon the basis of reciprocity, under

the guarantee of respect for acquired rights, and the conscientious observance of plighted faith, constitutes, at the present day, the essence of politics, of which diplomacy is only the daily application. Between politics and diplomacy there exists, in my opinion, the same difference as between science and art. Just as men daily transgress the laws of civil society, nations only too often act in opposition to the eternal precepts which govern their alliance. The faults of men and the faults of states are subject to the same punishments; their whole difference lies in the gravity of the offense, which is proportionate to the importance of the individuals.

When we master these truths, what becomes of a selfish policy, of the policy of fantasy, or of the policy of miserable greed, and especially what becomes of that which seeks profit apart from the simplest rulers of right; which mocks at the plighted word, and, in short, rests solely on the usurpations of force or craft?

After this confession of faith, it may be conceived what I have always thought of politicians of the stamp or, if we will, of the authority of a Richelieu, a Mazarin, a Talleyrand, a Canning, a Capo d'Istria, or a Haugwitz, and of many more or less famous names. Resolved not to walk in their steps, and despairing of opening a path in harmony with my own conscience, I naturally preferred not to throw myself into those great political affairs, in which I had far more prospect of succumbing materially than of succeeding: I say materially, for I have never been afraid of failing morally. The man who enters public life has always at command a sure resource against this danger, that is—retirement.

It was in January 1801 that I was made Ambassador Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary to the Electoral Court of Saxony. Peace had just been concluded between France and Austria at Luneville when I entered on my duties at Dresden, towards the end of that year. Napoleon Bonaparte was First Consul of the French Republic, which now existed only in name. The German Empire visibly approached its dissolution. The Emperor Paul had died a violent death in the March of that year. Europe was in a state of extreme tension, the natural result of the uncertainty then hanging over the whole world. Dresden, and especially the

Electoral court, like an oasis in the desert, formed a contrast to the universal agitation. To judge from this court alone, one might have believed the world was standing still. Everything there was ordered and arranged just as the last Augustus had left it to his successors. If etiquette, costume, and precise regulations could be a solid foundation for a kingdom, then Electoral Saxony would have been invulnerable. The costumes of the court, the gala days, and all its customs, were at that time what they had been in the middle of the eighteenth century. The French Revolution, after overthowing the old monarchy, had reached the stage of Bonaparte's consulate, but at the Saxon court hoops had not yet been discarded!

The Elector, Frederick Augustus, was a prince of solid ability, and his government would have long remained a blessed memory to his quiet and industrious country had not the storm which a few years later burst forth destroyed his mild and peaceful rule.

Dresden had always a numerous diplomatic corps. Among my colleagues, Mr. Elliot, the English ambassador, was conspicuous for the originality and eccentricity of his character. The life of this diplomatist had been remarkable. As a young militia officer, he introduced himself into the great world in a very odd way. At the reviews at Potsdam a number of foreign officers gathered every year round King Frederick II. On these occasions this prince showed his partiality for the French, hence the Chamberlain, who had to present the foreigners at the Prussian court, introduced the French officers singly by name, while the English officers were all presented *en bloc*. At a reception of this kind, at which young Elliot was present, when the chamberlain said to the king, "I have the honor to present to your Majesty twelve Englishmen," he was interrupted by Elliot, exclaiming in a loud voice, as he turned to leave the room, "You are mistaken, Herr marschal; there are only eleven." Some years afterwards Elliot came as Ambassador Extraordinary to Berlin. Frederick had not forgotten the scene at Potsdam, and was little pleased by the appointment of Elliot, who had then only the rank of major. He determined to let his ill-humor with the London court and its representative be seen, and

chose a Count Lusi for the post in London. Count Finkenstein was requested to notify this appointment to the English ambassador, which he did in the following words: "The King has chosen Count Lusi, a major in his army, whose name may be known to you from the reputation he gained in the Seven Years' War. His Majesty flatters himself that your Court will be satisfied with this choice." Elliot answered without hesitation: "The King, your master, evidently could not have chosen any one who would have better represented him." With such manners as these, Mr. Elliot was not likely to make himself a favorite in Prussia.

Soon after Elliot was recalled from Berlin, and was appointed to Copenhagen, where he, on his own responsibility, declared war with Denmark, with the intention of freeing the King of Sweden from the danger to which he was exposed, by the taking of the fortress of Gothenburg. By this stroke of genius he did indeed attain his object, but nevertheless lost, and certainly with good reason, his second post, and came to Dresden, where he had already been for some years English ambassador at that important post when I arrived there.

By that time he had somewhat toned down, but he still possessed an extraordinary vivacity and this gained for him a position quite unusual in social life. A pleasanter man in society I have never known; with a character of the same mold as that of the Prince de Ligne, he was in no respect inferior to him, nay, in many was his superior. I saw him very often during my residence in Dresden, and reckon my relations with him among my most pleasant memories. Having a numerous family, he was anxious to obtain a good position, and succeeded in getting the appointment of Governor of Barbadoes, which post he afterwards exchanged for that of a Governor in India, and held the appointment till his death at a very advanced age.

The Dresden Embassy was interesting as a post of observation of the Northern courts, and thither I turned my eyes, and I can testify to the truth that in diplomacy no post is unimportant. I was careful to give my court exact intelligence of what I observed, without having recourse to the expedient for obtaining news resorted to by my friend

Elliot, who when I asked him one day, how he contrived to have a letter to send to London every post-day (there were two in the week), replied: "You will see no difficulty in the matter when I tell you my secret; if anything comes to my knowledge which may interest my government, I tell it; if I do not know of anything, I invent my news, and contradict it by the next courier. You see I can never be at a loss for material for my correspondence."

This joke was quite in Mr. Elliot's manner; but it is not unusual to meet with diplomatic correspondence made up after the same recipe, not perhaps purposely invented, but from credulity. This failing arises from weakness of judgment and the want of a critical examination of facts, which in no branch of the public service is more necessary than in a diplomatic career.

III—EMBASSY IN BERLIN

I REMAINED at Dresden as ambassador till 1803, when Count Stadion was appointed Ambassador in St. Petersburg, and I succeeded him at Berlin.

In the same year the Franco-Russian mediation took place at Regensburg, in consequence of which Germany experienced a revolution which destroyed the last foundations of the old German Empire, and thus greatly accelerated the moment of its utter dissolution. During the whole negotiation my father remained in Regensburg, to watch over the interests of his family. He received as compensation for the loss of his hereditary estates on the left bank of the Rhine, which had been confiscated by the French Republic, the Abbey of Ochsenhausen, and to this new possession I repaired in the course of the summer with my family.

The Emperor had raised Ochsenhausen to be a principality, as he had also raised the title of several other Counts of the Empire, in order to create new votes, and thus to supply the place in the Reichstag of those votes which had been abolished by the secularization of the ecclesiastical principalities. My father hoped that his love of the fatherland would find an opportunity in the immediate future of contributing to the strengthening of the Empire. I was so far from entertaining this hope, that I had, on the contrary, the firm con-

viction that the grand creation of Charlemagne was tending inevitably to its end. With its foundations utterly shattered by the process of mediatization, the Empire even at that time no longer existed, and I saw its elements dissipated, and the impossibility of its cohesion. My presentiments were only too just: and events soon proved this.

When I left Ochsenhausen I went first to Vienna in order to prepare myself for my new mission, and then in December of the same year to Berlin.

My *début* there was easy. I was received by King Frederick William III., and by the Queen as an old friend. The strict etiquette, by which the diplomatic corps was kept at the greatest possible distance from the Prussian court, was observed with regard to me only on those occasions when an exception made in my favor might have had the appearance of referring to my public position, and would therefore have mortified the whole diplomatic body. Eleven years had passed since I had seen the Queen; I found her surrounded with a true halo of beauty and dignity.

Queen Louisa was endowed with the rarest qualities. She did not excel in what is commonly called *esprit,* but she possessed a refined tact and strength of mind, for the exercise of which in a few years she had only too many opportunities. It would be difficult to describe the dignity and grace of her bearing, or the impression of sweetness and tenderness her manners made.

The royal family were then divided into different households: in the King's were included the widows of Prince Henry and Prince Ferdinand, brothers of Frederick II. The Prince of Orange, husband of a sister of the reigning king, lived in Berlin; and the Princess, wife of Prince Anton Radziwill, also enjoyed the honors of royalty. The Princes Ludwig and August, sons of Prince Ferdinand, had no separate household.

When I arrived in Berlin, Count Haugwitz, Minister of Foreign Affairs, and Baron, afterwards Prince, Hardenberg, exercised a great influence on politics. Freiherr von Stein was Minister of Finance. Of these statesmen I shall often have to speak.

In the diplomatic body there was no man of preëminent

ability. M. de Laforest, who formerly acted as plenipotentiary in the conference at Regensburg, filled the post of French Ambassador. Herr von Alopäus had been for many years the Russian Ambassador in Berlin, and Mr. Jackson represented England.

Prussia was then in a state of transition. Without attracting attention, this power raised itself from the state of torpor into which it fell through the Peace of Basle, and from the system of neutrality which made Prussia a mere spectator in the wars carried on by Austria and England, and partially by Russia against the French Revolution. A reaction was preparing in the mind of the nation, and especially in the army of Prussia, which aimed at making a stand against the progressive enlargement of the power of France, now become an empire. A crisis was at hand, produced by the prospect of a new war between Austria and France. By the greater part of the political prophets the camp at Boulogne was regarded as a preparation for a landing in England. Some better instructed observers saw in this camp a French army held in readiness again to cross the Rhine—and that was my opinion.[2]

Everything accordingly pointed to a renewal of the war. The Prussian cabinet, led by Count Haugwitz and Herr Lombard, dreaded the event; not so the men of action in the army, at the head of whom Prince Louis Ferdinand was specially conspicuous. These were urgent for war, and loudly declared for the interference of Prussia. Berlin was accordingly divided into two camps which displayed no great tender-

[2] In one of my longer conversations with Napoleon in the journey to Cambray, whither I accompanied the Emperor in 1810, the conversation turned upon the great military preparations which he had made in the years 1803-1805 in Boulogne. I frankly confessed to him that even at that time I could not regard these offensive measures as directed against England. "You were very right," replied the Emperor, smiling; "never would I have been such a fool as to make a descent upon England, unless indeed a revolution had taken place within that country. The army assembled at Boulogne was always an army against Austria. I could not place it anywhere else without giving offense, and being obliged to form it somewhere, I did so at Boulogne, where I could whilst collecting it also disquiet England. The very day of an insurrection in England, I should have sent over a detachment of my army to support the insurrection; I should not the less have fallen on you, for my forces were echelonned for that purpose. Thus you saw in 1805 how near Boulogne was to Vienna."

ness for each other. And here I would say a few words about Prince Louis Ferdinand.

That prince possessed great qualities, which were enhanced still further by a brilliant exterior, a noble bearing, and refined manners. Of quick apprehension and clear intellect, Prince Louis Ferdinand united in himself all that goes to make a remarkable man. Unhappily evil company had too much influence on his life. There were in him two different men: the one capable of everything great and noble; the other, regardless of these gifts of nature. I had much to do with this prince, who even took a liking for me, but the defects which I have mentioned raised a barrier between us. All my life I have had a horror of low company, but the prince was surrounded with it. In political principles we agreed, but our tastes and our manner of life differed too much for any true confidence to be possible between us.

The year 1804 passed in that unhappy condition which is neither peace nor war. The heavens were covered with thunder-clouds, the first flash from which did not issue until 1805.

In Austria great preparations were being made for a campaign. Count Ludwig Cobenzl was Vice-Chancellor; he and Count Colloredo, cabinet minister, were regarded as the leaders of the policy of the Empire. Count Colloredo was no great statesman; Count Cobenzl, a candid, open-hearted man, had, in his capacity of the Emperor's ambassador at the court of Catherine II. lived for many years in confidential intercourse with her—a favor which he shared with the Prince de Ligne, Count Ségur, the French envoy, and other excellent men, whom that princess liked to assemble around her. Although he shone in the *salon*, Cobenzl was not the man to lead a cabinet. Taught by the defeats of the earlier campaigns, and convinced by experience that the means applied in those campaigns were insufficient, and that Napoleon must be met by other generals than those who held the command in preceding wars, the Emperor had singled out General Mack, who stood high in the estimation of the army. Events afterwards proved how unhappy this choice was. Mack possessed many estimable qualities, but he should never have been raised to the post of supreme command. His intelli-

gence, industry, and perseverance fitted him for the place of Quartermaster-General: the task of commanding an army was beyond his powers.

At the approach of a war, in the preparation of which Napoleon had put forth all his strength, the ties between the Courts of Vienna and St. Petersburg, which the issue of the campaign of 1799 and the extravagances of Paul I. had greatly loosened, were drawn closer.

It was at the end of the year 1804 that I received the first communication respecting this great undertaking, in which the two courts were excessively anxious to gain the concurrence of Prussia. It was my task to smooth the way for this accession.

This seemed to me difficult, on account of the known sentiments of the men at that time entrusted with the direction of Prussian policy. The more decidedly the parties in Berlin were opposed to each other, the more difficult was it to make them see their true interests. The Emperor sent his brother the Archduke Antony to Berlin. His presence had no result. He returned to Vienna, leaving things as he found them. The Emperor Alexander then sent Prince Dolgoruki, one of the younger advisers whom he had gathered round him since he mounted the throne, a man full of fire and spirit, but of a nature nowise fitted for such a critical mission. As he had been instructed by his master to adhere to me in everything, I could influence his conduct, but not direct it. The Russian ambassador in Berlin, Herr von Alopäus, had filled that position for many years; his relations with the most influential persons in the government were most confidential; and yet the Emperor Alexander had no faith in his energy. I was therefore requested by that monarch to supply the deficiencies of his minister.

At last the Emperor Alexander, tired out by the continued evasiveness of the language used by the Prussian cabinet, decided on a most dangerous step. He would, in fact, force the King of Prussia to a decision, and at the same time weaken his strength by pushing on his own army to the frontier of East Prussia, where he halted. This military movement was intended to support the negotiations which were being carried on by the representatives of Russia and

Austria. But the object was not attained; the threat, on the contrary, rather increased the opposition. Under the influence of his different advisers, the King became more and more vacillating, and could not come to any resolution. Then there followed an interchange of letters between the two monarchs, which led to no definite result, and the Emperor Alexander, whose impatience increased daily, was more and more inclined to take violent measures. I remember a singular circumstance which occurred at this time, which I will not omit to mention.

I received the news one day that the Emperor Alexander was to strike a heavy blow. At a given hour a courier was to reach Herr von Alopäus with a communication to the King of Prussia to announce that the Russian army, without further delay, was to cross the frontier. The actual entry of the troops was to take place simultaneously with the arrival of the notice. When I received this news, I found that the warning had come too late; if I could have done so, I would have addressed to the Emperor Alexander the most urgent request that he would abstain from a course which certainly must end in throwing Prussia into the arms of France. It was on the eve of the catastrophe at Ulm when the Austrian forces were pushing on by forced marches to this point. Nothing promised success to the ill-considered step of the Emperor Alexander, especially if the character of Frederick William III. were considered. I could do nothing but await the event.

The Russian courier was to arrive in the evening. At nine o'clock I went to the ambassador, who was detained at home by a slight indisposition. Under the most frivolous pretexts, I remained with him till nearly midnight; then the sound of a carriage, which stopped at the door of his hotel, told me that the moment of the crisis had come. The arrival of a courier from the Russian headquarters was announced. Herr von Alopäus had the dispatches brought to him, and immediately began to open them. We stood close to a desk, at which the aged ambassador was accustomed to stand and write.

In spite of his increasing years Herr von Alopäus was vivacious almost to the point of impetuosity. In placing the

rather bulky dispatches on the writing-desk some papers fell on the floor, which we picked up. Beside the folio sheets which dropped I had remarked distinctly a letter of small size, and in fact, from the other dispatches this was seen to be a letter in the Emperor's own hand to the King of Prussia, of which a copy was enclosed. In this letter his Majesty informed the King that he had ordered his army to cross the Prussian frontier. The contents of these dispatches threw Herr von Alopäus into the greatest excitement; it would have had the same effect upon me, if I had not been prepared beforehand. He went off into very just remarks on the danger of the situation, and said at last: "The die is cast! nothing more remains to me but to do the bidding of the Emperor, and hand over the letter of his Imperial Majesty to the King."

But the letter had vanished. In his sudden fright at not finding it, and thinking of the gravity of the complication which must arise from the non-execution of the orders he had received, Herr von Alopäus tried to ascribe the absence of the autograph itself to an act of forgetfulness in the sender. As for me, I certainly saw a sealed letter with my own eyes, and now it was not there! For more than half an hour we sought under all the furniture without finding it; Alopäus in an impulse of despair clasped his head with both hands, and at this moment the Emperor's letter fell to the floor; it had got into a fold in the sleeve of his dressing-gown!

The Russians, however, did not cross the frontier then, as was intended. The Emperor Alexander thought better of it, and an attempt was made to overcome the vacillation of the King by a meeting of the two monarchs, at which the Emperor might influence him personally.

Our negotiations had taken this new phase, when Prince Dolgoruki was commissioned to deliver to the King another letter from the Emperor, in which he invited the King to the meeting already arranged, and repeated the threat of sending his troops through Prussian territory. Herr von Alopäus wrote to the minister asking an audience, with the urgent request that, considering the gravity of the case, Prince Dolgoruki and he should be admitted to the King, who was residing at Potsdam, as quickly as possible.

The same day Dolgoruki came to me. We agreed as to the language which he should hold with the King, while I assured him of my best support. "I fear, however," said I to him as we parted, "that the consequence of this pressure will be the alliance of Prussia with France." The prince promised to inform me, immediately on his return from Potsdam, of all that had taken place.

Prince Dolgoruki and Herr von Alopäus came to me on October 6, and told me what had occurred. They had on that day handed to the King the Emperor's letter. His Majesty read it, and declared without waiting a moment that he had offered the neutrality of Prussia to the belligerent powers, and that the moment one of those powers by violating his territory broke that neutrality, he considered himself at war with them. "Return to the Emperor, gentlemen," continued the King, "and inform him of my unalterable decision. I will write him a letter to the same effect." With this he dismissed the two ambassadors.

Hardly, however, had they left Potsdam than Baron Hardenberg, who happened to be at the palace, was sent after them to Berlin, to summon them back to the King. His Majesty had just received the news that Napoleon had invaded the neutral Prussian territory at Anspach, in order to outflank the Austrian army concentrated at Ulm. The King said to his minister: "Matters have taken another turn; go at once to Prince Dolgoruki. He will take with him a letter, in which I will inform the Emperor that the frontiers of my kingdom are open to him." Never, perhaps, have such important events come together in one decisive moment.

The King of Prussia's letter to the Emperor of Russia was taken to him by Prince Dolgoruki, and the King invited me to come to him at Potsdam.

I had a long conversation with the King, which confirmed me in my view of the danger of the steps taken by the Emperor Alexander in such grave circumstances. This prince, vehement and full of energy, impulsive, always in danger of acting rashly, and viewing things from the standpoint of his pet ideas, had on coming to the throne surrounded himself with a council formed of persons of his own age, whom he honored with the name of friends. Among these were Prince

Adam Czartoryski and Prince Dolgoruki. The former managed the affairs of the Foreign Office; the latter was one of those general officers of whom his Majesty constantly took counsel. As I have said, he was gifted with a warm imagination, and influenced the Emperor more than any one else with the idea of binding the hands of the King Frederick William—an enterprise which, from the character of that prince, must necessarily fail. The attitude of the King of Prussia was founded on strict neutrality, and in this he acted in good faith. The violent measures of Napoleon and Alexander, similar in character and coincident in time, left the King only the choice which of two insults he should resent; he chose without hesitation to pass by that which in form was the least injurious. Alexander had made known to the King, in a manner as peremptory as unusual, his determination to violate the neutrality of Prussia. Napoleon, on the contrary, admitted the neutrality of this power, and yet violated it. The King felt Napoleon's proceeding to be the more bitter insult.

Immediately after Alexander had received the King's letter, sent by Prince Dolgoruki, he set out on the road to Potsdam. The King invited the reigning Duke of Brunswick to come at once and begin the negotiations for the entry of Prussia into alliance with the two Imperial courts. This negotiation was conducted, on the one hand, by the Emperor Alexander and myself; on the Prussian side by Count Haugwitz for the political part, and by the Duke of Brunswick, to whom the King had given the command of the army, for the military part. Prince Adam Czartoryski, then Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Emperor of Russia, was the official representative of the Emperor; but in reality, the Emperor himself conducted the negotiations. My relations with his Imperial Majesty date from this epoch, and they afterwards became most confidential.

From the first moment, the Emperor and I fell under the ill-will of the Prussian negotiators. With ill-concealed anger, they resorted to every imaginable pretext to protract the arrangements which, in face of the calamitous circumstances of the war on the Danube, grew more and more urgent. Certainly these events were of a kind to make the Prussian Cab-

inet thoughtful. Yet of all resolutions they took the very worst. When the breach with France took place, the King should either have again proclaimed his neutrality, at the risk of seeing it violated a second time by one or other of the belligerent powers, or he should, with the least possible delay, have joined his forces with the Allies, and have endeavored by energetic action to restore the chances of war in their favor and his own. A calculation so simple did not enter the head of Count Haugwitz, and it found no response in the irresolute character of the Duke of Brunswick. The two Prussian negotiators made the worst possible choice, they decided for a system of vacillation.

At last the King made up his mind. A treaty of alliance between the three courts was signed at Potsdam on November 5, and the Emperor Alexander went immediately to the headquarters of the Emperor Francis.

Count Haugwitz, who could not evade the completion of the treaty of alliance, left open a backdoor of escape. He caused the King to send him to Napoleon to inform him, on the part of the King, that the King had decided to unite his forces with those of the two Imperial courts, in case the French army should not halt in its victorious career. The days necessary to carry out this step were duly calculated. At his departure, the Czar had given me full powers, and in his name also I was to watch over the strict fulfillment of the engagements just made. Without loss of time the Prussian army marched towards the Upper Danube.

Just at this time the war of 1805 entered its last phase. Count Haugwitz, having delayed his departure from Berlin more than eight days beyond the time agreed upon, did not find Napoleon at Vienna, and went to join him at Brünn. But, instead of executing his commission, he gave it the character of a simple act of politeness on the part of the King his master. Napoleon sent him back to Vienna. He was preparing to offer battle, to which the Emperor Alexander also was pressing forward. Napoleon found himself in a very dangerous position. The Archduke Charles was advancing by forced marches with the army of Italy through Styria; the Prussian army was in movement towards Regensburg; and, lastly, the news from Paris of the internal condition of

France was of the most disquieting character. If the allied armies, instead of offering battle at Austerlitz, had halted at a suitable distance, the French army would have been forced to fall back upon Vienna, and the Allies would then have been able again to take the offensive with vigor. Tyrol and even Upper Austria only waited for this to rise in one mass. Thus the chances of war were all in favor of the Allies, and never was position more grave than that of Napoleon. The Emperor Francis himself tried every argument to dissuade the Emperor Alexander from offering battle. It was however, begun, and it resulted in the Peace of Pressburg.

The Emperor bestowed on me the order of the grand cross of St. Stephen, in recognition of the services which he condescended to see in my share in the conclusion of the league with Prussia. This league was, thanks to the attitude of Count Haugwitz, a fruitless one. When he presented himself to the Emperor Napoleon after his entrance into Vienna, and offered him his congratulations on the victory, Napoleon asked him whether if the event had been different he would have spoken to him of the friendship of the King his master. Count Haugwitz took no notice of the sarcasm, and negotiated for the union of the Electorate of Hanover with Prussia. Napoleon gave, in fact, his consent to this, for, aiming as he did at the destruction of Germany, nothing could better serve his plans than a union of that character, which was a direct attack on the existence of the German Empire, and at the same time concealed within itself the germ of an irreparable breach between Prussia and Great Britain.

Vienna was the theater of all these not very honorable arrangements, which Count Haugwitz concealed from the King his master till his return to Berlin. This return he delayed as long as possible, sometimes on the plea of health, sometimes pretending important business which he carefully kept under a veil of mystery. At last he made his appearance at Potsdam, and gave the King an account of his political industry, leaving to the King the choice between the ratification of the act concluded by Haugwitz *sub spe rati,* and the deposition of the negotiator. The King ratified the treaty, but dismissed Count Haugwitz from his office, which he conferred on Freiherr von Hardenberg.

IV—AT THE COURT OF NAPOLEON

The consequences of the battle of Austerlitz made it impossible for those men who had undertaken the war of 1805 to remain in office. Count Colloredo, the cabinet minister, and Count Cobenzl, the Vice-Chancellor of Courland State, resigned, and the Emperor appointed Count Stadion, his ambassador at St. Petersburg, to be Minister of Foreign Affairs. As the Emperor Alexander had wished me to be ambassador there, I was ordered to leave Berlin, and to repair to my new appointment, by way of Vienna. At the beginning of April I reached that city, and presented myself to Count Stadion, who informed me that not St. Petersburg, but Paris, was to be my destination. Count Philip Cobenzl, who had been selected for the embassy in France, had been objected to by Napoleon, who pointed out me as the representative of Austria most suitable to strengthen those relations he was now anxious to see established between the two Empires.

I afterwards learned that the reasons which actuated Napoleon on this occasion were the following:—My French colleague in Berlin was M. de Laforest, before mentioned, a confidant of Prince Talleyrand. At the moment of extreme tension, just before the conclusion of the alliance between Austria, Russia and Prussia, the position of M. de Laforest had become most difficult. It had, however, always been my habit not to mingle business affairs with personal matters, and so I endeavored to maintain relations with my French colleague on a footing of frank courtesy. These relations continued during all the different phases of the affair. This did not escape the notice of Talleyrand, whose policy was not averse to the establishment of good relations between France and Austria. The influence of Count Philip Cobenzl had become stale in Paris, a new man was wanted there: the choice fell on me.

This change in my destination, when I learned it, fell upon me like a thunder-bolt. I resigned the position at St. Petersburg, with reluctance, for the personal relations in which I stood to the Emperor Alexander allowed me to hope that I might render service there to my monarch, and at the same time count on a sphere of action more suited to my views than

that which awaited me in Paris, face to face with Napoleon. The task of representing Austria in France, immediately after the Peace of Pressburg, presented so many difficulties, that I feared I should not be adequate to them. The next day I waited on the Emperor Francis, and ventured to describe the embarrassment of my position. He received me with his usual kindness, praised me for my conduct in Berlin, and set before me the necessity of accommodating myself to what he called my destiny, with expressions which made it impossible for me to oppose his wishes.

I was thus placed in a position opposed to my inclinations, but being determined always to subordinate them to a feeling of duty, I endeavored to make clear to myself the line I ought to take. Napoleon seemed to me the incarnation of the Revolution; while in the Austrian Power which I had to represent at his court, I saw the surest guardian of the principles which alone guaranteed general peace and political equilibrium. When I looked at my task from this point of view, the great importance of the functions I had to perform rose before me. I did not, indeed, fear to go wrong, as so many had done, from a heated imagination or self-love, for I felt myself free from these failings; but, on the other hand, I knew the many and dangerous rocks in my new position, and I resolved for the present, to keep my ambition within very modest bounds, and at least to prevent evil when I saw the impossibility of doing good.

I searched in the archives of the chancellery, but found little to help me. The French Revolution was not yet understood by the men whom fate had called on, to deal with this monstrous social catastrophe. The rapidity of the career of Napoleon had dazzled many spectators, and left them little time to weigh, impartially and quietly, the conditions on which his existence rested. I addressed myself to this task with pleasure, convinced as I was that the analysis of this personified product of the Revolution must necessarily explain to me how this man, from so mean a starting-point, could have raised himself to such a height. Some saw in Napoleon only the great general; some saw the ground of his elevation in his political talents; while others regarded him merely as an adventurer favored by fortune: all forgot that for the ex-

planation of the astonishing success of this man, it was indispensable to connect his personal qualities with the circumstances in which he lived.

I left Vienna in July 1806. When I arrived in Strasburg, I was not allowed to continue my journey; the order had been given in Paris, but the pretext made use of by the local authorities was, that they could not allow me to continue my journey without a positive order. The true cause of this unjustifiable proceeding was, however, the presence of Herr Oubril in Paris, through whose assistance Napoleon hoped to arrive at an understanding with the Russian court. Till this understanding, to which the Emperor Alexander afterwards refused his consent, was arrived at, the Emperor of the French seemed not to wish for my presence in Paris. If, indeed, I had been there, I should have used my influence to prevent that young and inexperienced negotiator from compromising himself in so painful a manner. When the negotiations with Herr Oubril had once been concluded *sub spe rati*, I was allowed to continue my journey to Paris, where I arrived on August 4. The next day I went to the Prince of Benevento (Talleyrand), then Minister for Foreign Affairs, whom I did not as yet personally know. He received me with the greatest cordiality, showed himself inclined to closer relations between France and Austria, and boasted of the moderation which he had displayed during the negotiations of the Peace of Pressburg. As this assertion was well founded, I took up my own position, and explained to him what the Emperor understood by friendly relations, which must not be confounded with submission.

This was, in fact, the beginning of my public life. All that had gone before might have shown the independence of my character. As a man of principles, I could not and I would not bend when it came to the point of defending them. Within a short space of time destiny had placed me face to face with the man who at this epoch ruled the affairs of the world; I felt it my duty and I had the courage never to offer to mere circumstance a sacrifice which I could not defend to my conscience both as a statesman and as a private individual. This voice of conscience I followed; and I do not think it was a good inspiration of Napoleon's, which called me to functions

which gave me the opportunity of appreciating his excellences, but also the possibility of discovering the faults which at last led him to ruin and freed Europe from the oppression under which it languished.

This study put means into my hand, the efficacy of which I had the opportunity of proving in a few years.

I presented myself to Napoleon, without delivering an address at the first audience I had at St.-Cloud, as was the custom of my colleagues. I confined myself to stating that as, in accordance with his own wishes, I had been chosen to represent the Emperor of Austria at his court, I should strive on every occasion to strengthen the good relations between the two empires on that basis upon which alone a lasting peace could be established between independent states. Napoleon answered me in the same simple style, and our subsequent personal relations took their tone from this first meeting.

France at that time felt the need of order, and would easily have been led in that direction, if Napoleon's love of conquest had not forced it to a system which ultimately led him to his ruin. War with Prussia was imminent: yet Napoleon might have acted so as to avoid it. This he would not do; and the consequences would have justified the choice made by Napoleon, had he not abused the victory.

In this Autobiography there will not be found a narrative of events belonging to diplomatic and military history; materials for the history of the time must be drawn from the state archives of official correspondence. It does not belong to the plan I set before me to specify the mass of labors which in the long course of my public life I was able to achieve. The present work is intended only to communicate what concerns myself, or has reference to the tone of mind which the circumstances of my time have produced in me, those of which I was a mere spectator and those in which I have myself played a part.

According to my opinion, Napoleon reached the summit of his power in the victory of Jena. If, instead of the destruction of Prussia, he had limited his ambition to the weakening of that power, and had then annexed it to the Confederation of the Rhine, the enormous edifice which he had succeeded

in erecting would have gained a foundation of strength and solidity, which the Peace of Tilsit did not gain for it; indeed, the conditions of that peace were so hard and overstrained that it essentially contributed to its downfall.

The mistake which the Prussians made in 1805 in not uniting their strength with that of Austria and Russia, was renewed in the rising of 1806; and yet it was to this repeated mistake, that we owe the liberation of Europe from the yoke which Napoleon's love of conquest had imposed upon it. For King Frederick William III. the war of 1806 was not premeditated, but rather the effect of an agitation which he had not the strength to resist. Prince Louis Ferdinand and the feeble *élite* of the army were at the head of the agitation for war. The great mass of the army as well as of the people were under the spell of the neutrality which the King contrived to maintain after the Peace of Basle, and which, after the dissolution of the German Empire, had given Prussia a kind of protectorate over North Germany. This position was weak on the face of it, and although it flattered the short-sighted plans of such men as Count Haugwitz, Lombard, and General von Pfuel, it hindered everything like enthusiasm in the nation. When Napoleon, in 1805, in order to ensure the success of a strategic combination, ventured to violate the neutral Prussian territory, he showed how well he understood the condition of Prussia; and certainly the attitude of Count Haugwitz after the battle of Austerlitz was not calculated to give him a different impression of the energy of that power. I am convinced, therefore, that the political mistake committed by Napoleon, after his enormous successes during the whole campaign, was chiefly the consequence of the false idea he had formed of the thorough exhaustion of the Prussian power. When Napoleon had reduced this kingdom to the condition of the Peace of Tilsit, he believed that he could leave it to die a natural death; and in his opinion the kingdoms of Westphalia and Saxony were the natural heirs of Prussia.

I took leave in the year 1810 to draw Napoleon's attention to what I thought a mistake in his calculation. He did not contradict me, and added, "I had taken it in hand, and must finish the work I had begun. You see, too, what Prussia

is good for." The events of a few years later than this prove that Napoleon was not infallible in his calculations: they justified mine.

There are few chapters in the history of nations which exhibit such astonishing vicissitudes of fortune as the history of Prussia from the death of the great Frederick till the Peace of Tilsit. Rising in the course of four reigns from the position of an electorate to a power of the first rank, this monarchy, after the campaigns of 1806 and 1807, was shaken to its very foundations. All seems contradiction in the annals of Prussia, and these annals comprise scarcely one century. In less than this period a barren and thinly populated country rose to a height of power which assigned to its rulers more than once the part of umpires in Europe, and this height of power it reached amid storms and agitations which threatened it at home and abroad. From the year 1740 there was not a moment when the Prussian army was not in active service. Its standing army, though out of all proportion to the number of the people, or the resources of the country, far from exhausting these, on the contrary, raised the monarchy to a height of power not aspired to in the wildest dreams of its greatest princes. Frederick II. on his deathbed said to his young nephew that his successors would do more than he had done if they knew how to maintain his conquests. But, in fact, they doubled them. And this state did not grow and increase in the midst of less civilized nations. On the contrary, all its conquests were over those which surpassed it in wealth and power. The Revolution, which since 1789 threatened to engulf the civilized world, contributed to the aggrandisement of Prussia. All the Powers that went to war with France exhausted themselves. Prussia alone drew advantage from all circumstances; and when she found herself with other states put down for the time, she went her own way with quiet steps and accommodated herself to the conqueror. Every campaign gave her a pretext for extending her influence; every truce either confirmed an encroachment on a weak and timid neighbor, or contrived that such should voluntarily place itself under her banner; lastly, every peace brought her a reward for exertions which she had nevertheless made only to serve her own purposes. Such were the

consequences of the mighty impulse given to the country by the genius of her first kings.

The observations which my position in the French capital enabled me to make during the whole duration of the war of 1806 and 1807 were in absolute contradiction to the reports industriously circulated by the organs of the Government on the condition of the country. I had the opportunity of convincing myself of the extreme care taken by the Emperor to magnify the effect of his victories. The account of some previous victory was spread through Paris previous to the officially prepared news of a defeat; the members of the Government itself might act as if in the greatest anxiety, whilst the cannon of the Invalides thundered forth the news of a victory already known.

Napoleon, in making use of such petty means, had doubtless the double object of adding brilliancy to his successes, and of furnishing the means to his police of ascertaining the feelings of individuals. With respect to the first, he may have succeeded to a certain point, but not in regard to the latter. A stupor then reigned in Paris, produced by a sense of the weight which the Emperor had laid upon all classes of society. With the exception of *agents provocateurs,* no person of any influence would have ventured to express aloud any sentiment unpleasant to the Government; but after all the loud talkers are not really the persons to be feared. The impression made on the public of Paris by the news of a battle won by Napoleon was certainly not that of joy: it was satisfaction that France had escaped the consequences, and at seeing that her internal peace was not endangered. The Emperor might with good right say at that time *La France c'est moi!* The revolutionary elements were only smothered. The country had not one friend in Europe, and an immeasurable feeling of unrest reigned amid the rejoicings for a victory of the French army, for every one knew that these victories made new ones necessary to complete the work, the ultimate extent of which no one could foresee. The phrase *gloire nationale,* which in the Restoration acted like magic, had not then the same effect. With a few exceptions, the nation would willingly have exchanged glory for safety. Under the Restoration the appeal to *la gloire* was a weapon of the Bonapartist

and revolutionary opposition; under the Empire the opposition was unanimous in its repudiation of a warlike tendency.

Intoxicated with victory, Napoleon returned from the banks of the Niemen to Paris. The first impression of the unrestrained idea of power of the insatiable conqueror was given to the diplomatic corps at the customary reception, when all the assembled representatives of foreign powers had in turn to hear the unpleasant things from the mouth of the Emperor. Sarcasm of every kind was interspersed with warlike menaces. I came off the best, although in the negotiations on the adjustment of the boundary between Austria and the kingdom of Italy, which at that time came to a conclusion in the Convention of Fontainebleau, the feeling of Napoleon betrayed itself in a way anything but satisfactory to the wishes of Austria.

It was at this time that the Princes of the new Confederation of the Rhine came to Paris, to do homage to their new master and to congratulate him on his fresh victories. At their head was the Prince Primate Freiherr von Dalberg. Six weeks after the arrival of that Prince, I happened to have an audience of Napoleon at St.-Cloud. In the ante-room I met the Prince Primate, who had come to take leave of the Emperor. He was just speaking to me of the grand prospects of the Bund, of the thankfulness of all its members to the Emperor Napoleon, and of the high destiny to which the German Fatherland was called, when he was invited to enter the Emperor's closet. He remained about eight or ten minutes with the Emperor, then came my turn.

Napoleon excused himself that he had kept me waiting so long. I remarked that to me at least the time had passed quickly, that the audience of the Prince Primate had not seemed to me to be a long one, at any rate for a farewell audience. "Well, what would you have?" said Napoleon smiling: "this man is full of empty dreams. He torments me continually to arrange the constitution of what he calls the German Fatherland. He wants his Regensburg, his Imperial court of supreme judicature with all the traditions of the old German Empire." He tried to speak again of these absurdities, but I cut him short. "Monsieur l'Abbé," I said to him, "I will tell you my secret. In Germany the small people want

to be protected against the great people; the great wish to govern according to their own fancy; now, as I only want from the federation men and money, and as it is the great people and not the small who can provide me with both, I leave the former alone in peace, and the second have only to settle themselves as best they may!''

My personal relations with Napoleon soon assumed the same character which they had before he took the field. About that time General Count Peter Tolstoy arrived in France as ambassador from Russia. The Emperor Alexander had enjoined him to attach himself to me, and to follow my advice. Count Tolstoy had not before served in the diplomatic line, and from the turn of his mind and his exclusively military knowledge he never was successful in this career; and in accepting the post of Ambassador in Paris he merely submitted to the will of the Emperor. The choice of the Emperor Alexander was, in my opinion, well suited to the position of affairs. As a zealous conservative, by nature and experience, the enemy of the system of conquest, this ''Ambassador against his will'' made no secret of his inclinations, and thereby gained the respect of men whose tendencies he had been directed to observe. Count Nesselrode, afterwards Vice-Chancellor of the Russian Empire, filled the post of first Secretary of Legation under Count Tolstoy, and from this time date the relations of personal confidence between us which have been maintained through the varied phases of our public life.

After the Peace of Tilsit, the Emperor of the French turned his eyes on Spain. In order to secure the carrying out of his plans, he thought it necessary to cripple Russia, after conquering Austria and Prussia, in two successive wars, and covering the eastern frontier of his Empire by the Confederation of the Rhine. The undertaking had but too great success at Erfurt. The conference which took place there between Napoleon and Alexander was a snare for the Russian monarch. In reality, Napoleon's thoughts were directed neither against Turkey nor against Asia; and if the hatred which he entertained for England led him to think for a moment of attacking her in her Indian possessions, this project existed only as an eventuality, dependent on the concurrence of cir-

cumstances as yet remote. Napoleon occupied himself rather with perfecting his Continental system, and with the expulsion of the Bourbons from the throne of Spain. The extravagance of these gigantic schemes brought about the fall of Napoleon a few years later, and the expedition against Spain, which beyond any doubt was a thoroughly mistaken idea on his part, only accelerated the catastrophe.

Napoleon left Paris in August. History has undertaken to describe the events of which Spain was the theater, and to record for posterity the reaction of those events on the destiny of Europe. They made a most lively impression upon the Austrian Cabinet; and I felt them the more, from my knowledge of them in my official capacity. Desirous of leaving a position where I could not obtain the necessary information, I asked leave, during the absence of the Emperor from Paris, to go to Vienna in order to give them the news I possessed, and learn some for myself. Leave being granted to me, I started on October 4, and arrived in Vienna on the 10th.

The meeting of the monarchs took place at Erfurt in September and October, 1808. Thither General Baron Vincent was sent from Vienna, under the pretext of welcoming the two Emperors; he had acted as ambassador in Paris from the peace of 1805 till my arrival. His candid and loyal character, as well as the tendency of his mind, had won Napoleon's regard. The Emperor Francis could not have made a better choice for so critical a mission. Through him and my colleague Tolstoy, I was kept informed of what passed at Erfurt, and could not but foresee, that enormous complications were inevitable from the approach of two such great potentates as Napoleon and Alexander—an approach which had no real basis, and was only a trap laid for the Russian monarch on the part of the French Emperor. But the calculation was wrong, because Napoleon, when he speculated on deluding the Emperor of Russia for a time, was quite mistaken as to the time necessary for accomplishing the overthrow of Spain.

The Chancellor, Count Romanzow, followed Napoleon to Paris, after his return from Erfurt, as closely as possible. Romanzow knew me from my earliest youth, for when he resided at Frankfort as Russian Ambassador to the Rhenish

Courts, he was a colleague of my father. During his residence at Paris, Count Romanzow was extremely intimate with me, and anxiously endeavored to flatter the new ally of Russia. All that Count Romanzow did was in good faith, and I doubt not that he took this alliance to be quite sincere. I am sure that he only followed the guidance of his conscience, when he endeavored to correct my ideas with regard to this new political phase. Count Romanzow, a clever man, though of no deep intellect, was caught in the nets which Napoleon spread for him. Loaded by Napoleon with favors, he took all these attentions as genuine, and was at last so dazzled by them that in the course of a long conversation, I do not now remember on what subject, he thought to silence me with the following words: "I have Napoleon in my pocket; do you think that I am going to let him go?" By a curious coincidence, it happened that I had just come from the Emperor, and my conversation with him had given me an impression which scarcely agreed with this. Napoleon had, in fact, spoken to me of the Chancellor with extreme candor, and made no secret of his mean opinion of him as a statesman.

My position was a peculiar one. I was placed at the most prominent post for observing the movement of which the Emperor of the French was the center. I represented at his court a great monarch, whose kingdom had yielded under the force of circumstances, but which was ready to rise on the first opportunity. I was penetrated with the feeling of danger to my country, if it entered on a new war with France without having more probable chances of success; and I conceived that my task consisted in playing the part of a quiet and impartial spectator—impartial, so far as this might be possible to a man of feeling, at an epoch when the world was passing through a social transformation. Nowhere was the conflict between the fermenting elements more vehement than in the great country in which I was living. Beyond the confines of France, Governments had no other care than to withstand the political encroachments of the conqueror who had placed the Imperial crown on his head. The conflict between the different systems of government really existed only in France. Raised by the Revolution to the summit of power, Napoleon endeavored to prop up by monarchical institutions

the throne he had made for himself. The destructive parties, having to do with a man equally great as a statesman and as a general, who knew his country and the spirit of the nation better than any who ever guided the destinies of France, were above all anxious to save from the wreck of their works all they could secure from the encroachments of the Imperial power. These efforts were impotent; but they were not the less worthy of observation.

My impartial attitude gained me the confidence of the most prominent men of different parties, beginning with Napoleon himself. One individual I must except. I never saw Lafayette. When the Emperor spoke to me of him, he did so with an expression of that contempt which he had for every one whom he considered an *idéologue*. Among the most eager courtiers of the Empire might be seen the fiercest partisans of a Government which, after it had shed blood in streams, vanished like smoke under the Directory. Napoleon spoke of these men with the deepest scorn; he said to me one day: "These people were the perpetrators of impious deeds but a short time ago; now I use them in building up my new social edifice. There are some good workmen among them; the mischief is, that they all want to be architects. That is always the case with the French; there is hardly one among them who does not think himself capable of governing the country!"

Among the dismal celebrities of a bloody epoch I will mention Barère, who gained the nickname of the Anacreon of the Guillotine. To my great surprise, this man one day desired an interview with me. I found in him the traces of that spurious refinement which was also a characteristic of Robespierre. The reason of his coming was to ask a favor for one of his relations. To judge from his physiognomy, one might have taken him for the most harmless creature in the world. I shall perhaps have to speak again of persons of the same stamp as Barère and Merlin de Thionville, whose reign ended with the Reign of Terror.

Napoleon's mind was full, as I have said before, of the overthrow of Spain. He was preparing to appear personally on the scene where the great drama was to be played. This might lead to contingencies for which the Vienna Cabinet

must provide. The preparations made in Austria pointed to warlike designs. Before he left Paris, Napoleon, wishing to insult Austria, chose for the purpose the ceremonious audience which he was accustomed to grant to the diplomatic body on his *fête,* August 15.[3]

These audiences took place immediately before the service, which the Emperor, accompanied by a great retinue, attended in the chapel at St.-Cloud. Just before noon the diplomatic corps was conducted to the audience-chamber. I took my usual place in the circle, having Count Tolstoy on my right, the rest of the diplomatic corps being arranged in a semicircle, in the center of which was the Emperor. At such ceremonials the princes of his family were ranged behind him, then the cabinet ministers, the members of the court, and the adjutants.

After some minutes of unusual silence, Napoleon advanced towards me with great solemnity. He stopped two feet in front of me, and addressed me in a loud voice and pompous tone: "Well, Sir Ambassador, what does the Emperor, your master, want—does he intend to call me back to Vienna?" This address did not disconcert me; I answered him calmly, and in no less elevated tones. Our conversation the longer it lasted took on Napoleon's side more and more the character of a public manifestation, Napoleon raising his voice as he always did, when he had the double end in view of intimidating the person he was addressing and of making an effect on the rest of his hearers. I did not alter my tone, and met his worthless arguments with the weapon of irony; from time to time Napoleon appealed to Count Tolstoy as a witness; but when he observed that the Count preserved an unbroken silence, he turned round, breaking off in the midst of a sentence, and strode to the chapel without completing the round of the circle. This scene lasted more than half an hour. The Empress Josephine and her train waited in the hall through

[3] Till the Concordat, no day had been set apart in the calendar for Saint Napoleon. The Emperor of the French obtained the permission of Pope Pius VII., however, to have his festival on the day of the Assumption of the Virgin. As this day was kept as a great festival in consequence of the reconciliation with the Roman Court, the Emperor chose it in order that his *fête* might coincide with a religious festival observed throughout France.

which the Emperor had to pass, and no one could explain the reason of the length of this so-called diplomatic audience.

As soon as Napoleon had left the audience-chamber, all my colleagues thronged round me, to congratulate me on having, as they said, given the Emperor a lesson. A few hours afterwards I went to the Hôtel of Count Champagny, then Minister of Foreign Affairs, who gave a great banquet in honor of the day. On my entrance he said to me, he was ordered by his master, the Emperor, to assure me, that the scene at the audience had nothing personal in it; and that his master's intention had merely been to explain the position. I assured the minister that I too put the same construction on the incident; and, for my part, did not regret that the Emperor had given me the opportunity to explain before assembled Europe what the monarch whom I had the honor to represent wished—and what he did not wish. "Europe," I continued, "will be able to judge on which side reason and right are to be found." Count Champagny made no answer.

In order to understand the moral view by which the Austrian cabinet was actuated, it will be enough to refer to the political relations existing in Europe. Under the weight of the unhappy issue of the war of 1805, Austria had collapsed. The Confederation of the Rhine, under the protection of the French Emperor, had taken the place of the German Empire; and after the last war between France and Prussia the Princes of North Germany also had entered this Confederation. Tyrol had joined Bavaria, and the dukedom of Warsaw, under the supremacy of the King of Saxony, was pushed in between Austria and Russia. The Peace of Tilsit had destroyed the Prussian power, and from the conference of Erfurt there had resulted an illusive alliance between Russia and France, the twofold object of which was the silent assent of the former power to the attacks of the latter, and the partition of the Ottoman Empire between the two, adjusted on the supposition of its impending fall.

Austria, therefore, was in a position in which she could not possibly maintain herself. The Imperial cabinet was not alone in this feeling. Napoleon was so convinced of it that he looked upon Austria as a prize in prospect for one of his new German allies. Not only then was a renewal of the war in

the nature of things, but it was for our Empire an absolute condition of its existence. This question was to my mind settled. But the points which remained, and, in my view, required ripe consideration, were, the choice of the right moment for beginning the war, and the settling of the plan of operation.

Immediately after my arrival in Vienna, I went to Count Stadion, who at that time was Minister for Foreign Affairs. He gave me an insight into the position: I found that war was nearer than I had supposed when I left Paris. I explained to him my reasons for obtaining leave to come to Vienna, and gave him to understand that it would be impossible for me to be really useful to the important interests committed to my care, if I were not thoroughly initiated into the feeling of the Court. Count Stadion showed the liveliest satisfaction at coming to an understanding with me. The next day I waited on the Emperor. A conversation of many hours gave me the impression that the Cabinet was more decided than the Emperor, not indeed in respect to the war in itself, for with good reason it was looked upon as unavoidable, but as to choosing the right moment. His Majesty charged me most urgently to make myself acquainted with the steps about to be taken, and to assist the cabinet with my advice.

Emboldened by this request and the extraordinary importance of the circumstances, I did not fail to explain the situation exactly as it was. My statement consisted of the following elements:—

The material preparations were nearly completed, so that the army might, by the beginning of the year 1809, take the field. In this respect everything was secured, and that to a degree which the enemy, if he judged from the disasters of the campaign of 1805, could not expect.

It was not so with the moral side of this great undertaking. I can testify that the cabinet was subject to more than one illusion.

The change made in the original plan of the campaign necessarily exercised an influence on the moral side of the undertaking, which was quite as worthy of being taken into account as the material operations, when the state of men's minds in Germany was considered.

As I received no instructions from Vienna, I could contribute little. Nothing could suit Napoleon better. He continued, after my return, to treat me with his customary kindness. The passive part I had to play was a contrast to the excessive activity in the military preparations, of which I was condemned to be a mere spectator. If the Paris public judged from my relations to the Court, it must have been very difficult for it to believe in the impending outbreak of a new war with Austria. Napoleon liked to surprise the Parisians, and to make known his wars only by the cannons fired from the *Invalides* to announce the success of the first battle. Willingly would I have hindered him from acting so now; but this unhappily was not permitted to me; for only by his unexpected departure from Paris in the night of the 14th of April, and by the message I received from Count Champagny on the 15th, that he had orders from his master to give me my passports, did I learn that peace was at an end; the courier who ought to have brought me the news had been detained at Châlons-sur-Marne. By another courier the Minister for Foreign Affairs assured me, in the name of the Emperor, that the safety of my family would be cared for, in case I did not take them with me, but wished to leave them in Paris.

When I had fixed my departure for the 19th, the Postmaster-General de Lavalette[4] refused me horses, under the pretense that they were required for the Emperor's use. My repeated requests always met with the same refusal; and I was relieved from this state of uncertainty only by a letter from Count Champagny, which he sent to me from Munich on the 19th, in which he informed me that, the cause of the hindrances put in the way of my departure from Paris had been the arrest of the French agent and attaché in Vienna, and their being carried off to Hungary. At the same time he disclosed to me that till an exchange was made of the *personnel* of the embassy, I should not be allowed to leave Paris.

The measure, on the part of the Court of Vienna, was unusual, and also quite unnecessary; it originated in fear, and

[4] One of the oldest adjutants of General Bonaparte. I had made his acquaintance at the Congress of Rastadt, at the beginning of which he was present. He it was whose wife, after the return of the Bourbons in 1815, aided him to escape out of prison when he was threatened with a fate like that of Marshal Ney and General Labédoyère.

might have compromised my personal safety: the French ambassador had already come back from Vienna. This was, in my eyes, a fresh example of the false estimate the Austrian cabinet made of Napoleon's character and attitude. I remained quietly in Paris, and can certify from my own observations, how exceedingly weary France was of the war. The news of the very important events which attended the opening of the campaign were received in Paris with a painful feeling, that already approached aversion to the conqueror. My life in society continued to be the same as before the rupture: indeed, I might even maintain that the attentions of the public towards me rather increased.

As I have reached that point of my narrative when my office of Ambassador in France came to an end, I think I may say a few words on the internal condition of the country, and on some of the most prominent individuals of the time.

France felt the need of repose, and this feeling prevailed not only among the masses, but was shared by Napoleon's companions in arms. These individuals had been for the most part taken from the lower ranks of the army, and raised to the height of military honor. They had become rich from foreign spoil and the calculated generosity of the Emperor, and now wished to enjoy what they had gained. Napoleon had made a brilliant existence for them. The Prince of Neufchâtel (Berthier) had a yearly income of more than 1,200,000 francs: Marshal Davoust had property which brought in an income of a million: Masséna, Augereau, and many other marshals and generals were equally wealthy. These men wished to enjoy their possessions, and objected to stake them on the chances of war.

Many in civil life had, like the generals, risen to great wealth. One source of riches, which during the wars of the Revolution had existed for a class of speculative spirits, was exhausted. The war which Napoleon declared against the fraudulent army-contractors, and the strict order which he had introduced into all dealings with the public money, reacted on this class, already so numerous before Napoleon mounted the throne, and infused into them an aversion to the warlike policy, which formerly had the best wishes of themselves and those with whom they dealt. The nation, decimated

by the annual levies, far from interesting itself in military operations carried on so far from the frontiers of France that even the names of the places where new victories were gained were unknown, cursed the conquests whose political value they were not capable of understanding. In a word, France was anxious for peace, and it was a great mistake of the European Courts at that time, that in their political action they did not take this fact into account. Napoleon was in power, but between the system followed by him and the feeling of the great country which he governed there was a repugnance of which the cabinets of Europe were not aware. It would have been wise if this had not been excluded from their calculations, which, in spite of all that the French manifestoes said on the subject, sprang only from the feeling of self-preservation in the European States. This remark explains my anxiety that, on the near approach of the war, the right course should be taken. The universal error in Europe arose from the fact that the vast encroachments made by the violent ambition of one man were supposed to spring from a national movement in France itself. I should hardly myself have seen this so clearly if I had not been placed in so favorable a position for observation.

The Emperor enjoyed, in France, that popularity which will be always gained by a ruler who knows how to hold the reins of power with an equally firm and skillful hand. Napoleon's practical mind enabled him to understand the needs of a country where the social edifice had to be rebuilt. Abroad a soldier, at home he was a legislator and most able administrator. Therefore the country lamented to see him and his work exposed to the chances of war. France was no longer inspired by a warlike spirit. The revolutionary parties alone, between 1792 and the beginning of the nineteenth century, entertained the idea of war. This they did with the double object of employing beyond the frontier the army, which was always a danger when at home to this party, and of defending the frontiers against foreign invasion. Had Napoleon confined his plans to the preservation of what the Republic had conquered, he would have greatly increased his popularity; his warlike temperament carried him much further. He was a born conqueror, legislator, and administrator, and he

thought he could indulge all three inclinations at once. His undoubted genius furnished him with the means of doing so. The sentiment of the enormous majority of the nation would have been entirely with him if he had confined himself to the duties of government.

The greater part of the high officials shared in this national feeling. Among these were the Prince of Benevento (Talleyrand), Fouché, then Minister of Police, and a great number of marshals and generals. The moral power of the Emperor was too overpowering to be opposed openly, therefore intrigue was resorted to, and this was a means quite suited to the characters of the two first-named personages. During the time that I was ambassador, I had many opportunities of verifying this fact.

Talleyrand possessed unusual intellectual ability. My long-continued relations with him made me aware that his whole character more adapted him to destroy than to create. A priest, his temperament led him to irreligious courses. Of noble birth, he pleaded for the uprooting of his class; under the republican rule he foreswore the Republic; under the Empire he was constantly inclined to conspire against the Emperor; under the Bourbons, lastly, he labored for the overthrow of the legitimate dynasty. To hinder any definite course from being taken—for that Talleyrand was always ready. In the contrary direction, I could never discover equal ability. Napoleon so estimated him, and with justice. In one of our conversations which took place in consequence of one of the many withdrawals of Talleyrand from the Ministry, the Emperor said to me: "If I want anything done, I do not employ the Prince of Benevento; I turn to him when I want a thing not to be done which I wish to appear to want." In private life, however, Talleyrand was as trustworthy as he was agreeable.

Fouché was a complete contrast to Talleyrand. In consequence of the contradictory character of the two men, the word "rivalry" was not applicable to them. Their opposition was radical, for it had its source in difference of character. Fouché had been a priest, like Talleyrand, and had stained himself with blood and mire; while Talleyrand lost himself in the theories of that school which called itself the

English School. Fouché was an enemy to all theories; he was a practical man, deterred by no obstacle. Thoroughly acquainted with the French mind, he went forward with the time, but always in extremes, convinced as he was that in this manner only an extreme end could be attained. Never had these two men any points of contact, unless their paths crossed in following out some conspiracy against the existing order of things. Napoleon knew both of them, and made use of their talents, as well as their faults, whenever he thought they could be useful to favor his own views. At the time of which I speak, Fouché, as Minister of Police, had gained the confidence of the *émigrés,* to whom Napoleon had re-opened the doors of France. He showed them all the services in his power, which seemed to bear the character of complete disinterestedness. Fouché foreboded the overthrow of the Emperor, and hence regarded the return of the Bourbons only as possible.

The man in whose talent for governing Napoleon had the most confidence was Cambacérès, and, therefore, when he took the field beyond the frontiers of France, he left the business affairs in his hands. More than once Napoleon analyzed to me the peculiarities of the Arch-Chancellor, as they appeared to him. I had not the opportunity myself of forming an opinion with regard to Cambacérès, for he lived in seclusion, and never left it but on occasions of great ceremonial. At the beginning of the Revolution he sat as advocate in the Parliament of Aix in Provence, the President of which was M. d'Aigrefeuille. The advocate made his fortune, the president was ruined. The two being friends, Cambacérès took him into his house. When his protector was at the height of his power, D'Aigrefeuille filled the position of a servant. One day, when Cambacérès was invested with the dignity of *Archi-chancelier* of the kingdom—that fantastic imitation of the ceremonial of the old German Empire—to which the title "Durchlaucht" (Serene Highness) was attached, D'Aigrefeuille addressed him for the first time with this title. "When we are alone," said Cambacérès to him, "don't use these empty titles; continue to treat me as a friend, and content yourself with calling me Monseigneur."

When Napoleon made the first batch of Counts and Barons,

Cambacérès celebrated the event by a banquet, to which he invited the ambassadors and first officials of the kingdom. After dinner the newly ennobled came to pay their respects to him. As the new titles were announced, the reception-room was filled with laughter; Cambacérès alone was imperturbable.

On May 16, Fouché wrote to me that, in consequence of an order from the Emperor, he had to request me to go to Vienna, to be there exchanged for some of the *personnel* of the French embassy. He wished to know the day I thought I could start, which he begged me to hasten as much as possible, and added that an officer of gendarmes would escort me on my journey. I named the next day, but an inflammation in the eyes detained me in Paris till the 26th. I took with me all the officers of the embassy, and some Austrian travelers who had been detained in Paris, who, but for this opportunity, might have found difficulty in leaving France. I left my family in the hotel of the embassy. The progress made by the war and the siege of Vienna itself led me to prefer this course to the chances of a difficult journey. Besides, I knew the ground too well to be uneasy as to the welfare of those I left behind me in Paris.

At Châlons-sur-Marne, I met the first train of Austrian prisoners, among whom were many officers of my acquaintance. I hastened to hear the news from them, but I had none to give them in exchange, for I had been deprived of every source of information, except the French army bulletins, since the beginning of the campaign. In Luneville a report was current that the French had lost a decisive battle. In Strasburg I heard this confirmed, it referred to the battle of Aspern. The Empress Josephine was residing at the time in this city. I had hardly alighted, when I received an invitation to go to her in the course of the evening. I found her in great anxiety as to the consequences the event might have. She told me of circumstances, which she had learned, which left me no doubt as to the importance of the defeat. They seemed so decisive and exact that Josephine did not doubt I should, on my arrival in Vienna, find the negotiations for peace already begun. The Empress went so far as to think I might meet Napoleon returning to France! I mention this circumstance, because it shows how little confidence as to the

issue of this war was entertained in the very bosom of the family of Napoleon.

On June 5 I arrived at Vienna, and went to the Palais Esterhazy with Prince Paul, who was with me as my attaché. I hastened to my father, whom I found quite overwhelmed by an order he had just received, to repair, with the Archbishop of Vienna and Counts Pergen and Hardegg, to France, as hostages for the payment of a contribution imposed on the city of Vienna. My father was determined to yield to force only, in which plan I encouraged him; while, on the other hand, I took upon myself to dissuade Napoleon from so false a measure. For this purpose I went, by the permission of the Prince of Neufchâtel, direct to the Emperor, and the so-called hostages remained in the capital without further molestation. Napoleon laid the blame on the Commissary-General.

The next morning I visited Champagny, in the Burg, where the Empress had rooms, while the Emperor lived at Schönbrunn. The minister received me with honied phrases, in which a great feeling of anxiety was perceptible. In consequence of the battle of Aspern, the position of the French army was quite altered. Public spirit was roused once more in Vienna. The precautions taken by the invading army were redoubled. The time teemed with the most important events, which were explained by the different parties each in their own manner. There was no confidence on the enemy's side. Champagny told me he had not been informed on what day the officers of the French embassy, who were to be sent in exchange, would be at the place appointed, and begged me to wait in patience for this moment. "Think, meanwhile, on the possible issue of the impending drama: you will find the Emperor in good humor about it." I answered, that in my position, as prisoner, I had nothing to do with business, and that I should await the arrangements respecting my person very quietly. Champagny invited me to dine with him on that day, and I found myself in the enemy's camp, in the capacity of an unconcerned spectator. Thus I had no opportunity to prepare myself for what was reserved for me in the time just at hand.

On the morning of June 7, an adjutant of Count Andrassy, then Governor of Vienna, came to me to announce, in the

name of the Emperor, that I could not remain in Vienna; but that it was left to me to await the moment of my exchange in any place I preferred in the neighborhood of the capital. I declared myself ready to obey the orders of the Emperor; but I added, at the same time, that I was in reality not a prisoner, and that the more painful he made my position the more he would add to its injustice. I asked to be allowed to go to a country house belonging to my mother at Grünberg, a mile and a half from Vienna, close to the garden of Schönbrunn. This choice was accepted; and thither I repaired on the morning of the 8th. The officer of gendarmes, who came with me from Paris, I took to live with me at Grünberg; and as I would not have the officers of the embassy share my uncomfortable position, I took only my necessary servants with me. During the whole time of my stay in this house I was careful to behave as a prisoner; in spite of the fine speeches of my jailers, I did not go beyond the house.

Some days after my arrival in Grünberg, I heard the sound of a horse in the front of my house. I ran to the window and saw General Savary, who on seeing me made as if he had not known that I was living there, and jumping down from his horse, came in to see me. Savary was chief of the police at headquarters,—an office which he filled, also, when the Emperor resided in Paris. Savary was at the head of one division of police whose business it was to control that which Fouché directed. The palaces inhabited by Napoleon were under the guardianship of a third body of police, at whose head was General Duroc.

General Savary did not hesitate to turn the conversation to politics, which he did apparently with candor, finding fault with the perpetual war, the dangers of which for France itself he recounted, whilst he dwelt on the necessity of obtaining a lasting foundation for peace. I allowed him to deliver himself of all his phrases without interrupting him; and when he saw my calmness and quietness, he said to me, "Why do you not use the opportunity of being in the Emperor's neighborhood to obtain a meeting with him? You live two or three steps from one another, the gardens are close together: instead of taking the air in your own, go over into the Schönbrunn garden; the Emperor will be delighted to see you."

"The pleasure," I answered, "would not be mutual; still that consideration would not keep me back. But I shall not go out of this place till the day when I receive the order to do so. I can do nothing by halves. If I am a prisoner, I behave myself as a prisoner; if I am free, I shall make use of my freedom; but if I had my freedom at this moment, I should certainly not use it in order to go and walk with Napoleon in the garden belonging to the Emperor my master."

"You do not wish then to see the Emperor?" answered Savary. "You would find him in the best and most peaceful disposition. A conversation between you might have the happiest consequences. You would perhaps obtain for the Emperor Francis some most important suggestions. I hope you do not confuse a certain proclamation with Napoleon's true feelings: those were words spoken to the winds."

"I have nothing to say to your master, and nothing to hear from him," said I to Savary. "I am practically a prisoner, and prisoners of my kind consider themselves, if they do their duty, as dead."

On my making this declaration, Savary left me. I did not doubt but that he had been commissioned by Napoleon to sound me with regard to a meeting; and if I had not had from the very beginning a presentiment that this was his purpose, a step made in this direction by the Minister of Foreign Affairs would have left me no doubt on the matter. On the second as well as the first occasion I refused the meeting, which would have been turned to account by Napoleon in a way which I had no right to allow to be done. It is evident that, looking at the position of the two armies, Napoleon wished to avoid the risks of a new battle, after that of Aspern, and would have been well pleased if he could have made use of me to induce the Imperial Cabinet to take the initiative in the interests of a peaceful settlement.

At the place in which I was interned I received visits from the most distinguished men of Vienna; I thus learned the real position of the two armies, and could not doubt that we were standing on the eve of an event the result of which would be decisive of the fate of the campaign. On the evening of June 17 Colonel Avy, a staff officer, came to me with a message from Marshal Berthier, that I was to go next morning to the

place where the exchange was to be made, and that he was ordered to accompany me. I therefore left Grünberg on the 18th. In my escort I found the Attaché of the Parisian Embassy, Prince Paul Esterhazy and Count Mier, and the Counselor of Legation Floret. My *cortége* consisted of five carriages, which were escorted by fifty mounted Jägers. We passed the night at the house of Count Harrach at Bruck, on the Leitha. When we had arrived in Wieselburg on the 19th, Colonel Avy would not halt till he had received news of the arrival of the French *employé* at the outposts. But when he learnt through an adjutant of the vice-King of Italy (Eugène Beauharnais) that the commandant of Komorn, General Davidovich, was quite uncertain on what day this agent would arrive, on account of the distance, Avy declared that he had received orders to make the exchange on the 21st, and that if it were not accomplished, I must go back to Vienna, for he could not stay any longer at Wieselburg. In fact, on the evening of the same day, I had to return to the house at Grünberg. Napoleon immediately sent to apologize for what had taken place, by one of his adjutants, and to show me letters of the Commandant of Komorn and Chief of the Staff to the vice-King, as a proof that there was neither mistake nor ill will on his part.

On June 26, Col. Avy came with the news that the French *employé* would be on the 28th at Acs, one of the places declared neutral, for twenty-four hours, for the purpose of making the exchange. We set off together at daybreak the following day, and arrived at Raab early on the 28th. On the way, I learned that Pressburg had been bombarded on the night of the 27th. After some hours' rest, we went, under an escort of fifty dragoons, to Acs, where I stopped with General Montbrun, who commanded the outposts of the French army at this point. Opposite the place where, near to Gönyö, the high road runs along the banks of the Danube, an Austrian battery had been erected. The officer in command of it, when he saw a train of carriages coming forward, guarded by a strong escort, thought it must be the retinue of the vice-King of Italy, and fired a volley at once. Although the zeal was misplaced, I could not but do justice to the skill of our artillerymen. Of the first two shots, one went through the wheel of

my carriage, the other passed two feet above the roof of it. Upon this, my escort left the high road, and took me as quickly as might be across the fields.

On the 29th, the *employé* not having arrived at the place of rendezvous, General Montbrun sent to Komorn to inquire after him. General Davidovich replied that M. Dodun would not be at the outposts for two or three days. On hearing this, Colonel Avy, on the 30th, took me back to Raab, by Bony, in order to avoid the famous battery at Gönyö. On the morning of July 1, Colonel Avy was informed by Prince Eugène, the chief of the staff, that the French *employé* had reached Komorn, and would be at Acs by the afternoon at two o'clock. We immediately went on our way again. While going backwards and forwards in this way, I saw a great movement take place in the French army. The bodies of troops which I met were marching towards Vienna. As no military event had taken place, I could only suppose that Napoleon was preparing to strike a blow.

On our arrival at Acs, at seven o'clock in the morning, we found the mansion empty which had been the headquarters of General Montbrun. The house-steward whom I questioned, told me that the place had been vacated the evening before, and was now occupied only by a division of the Hungarian "*Aufstand.*" When Colonel Avy received this news, he jumped out of my carriage, and ran to the officer in command of the escort, "Give me the best horse you can spare!" I drew the Colonel back; "You forget," said I to him, "that our parts are exchanged. I have been under your protection; now you are under mine, national law protects you; you will not be made a prisoner." At this moment an Austrian officer of the staff appeared with an escort, and informed us that the French *employé* was at the place appointed for carrying out the exchange. I requested Colonel Avy to halt the escort, and to follow me. We went to the place, where we found Dodun. I joined the Austrian, he the French corps. I never heard anything more of this diplomatist: Colonel Avy was killed in Spain in 1810 or 1811. His personal attention to me during the whole time of the performance of his thankless task should be mentioned with praise.

In Komorn I met the Archduke Palatin, who took the

command of the Hungarian *"Aufstand."* I learned from him that the Emperor Francis was waiting at Wolkersdorf with impatience till I could join him. I spent the night in Komorn, and reached Wolkersdorf on the evening of July 3.

The Emperor received me with the hearty kindness which he had already showed me so abundantly. He told me all that had happened since my departure from Vienna in the last days of the previous year. Quiet and firm as ever, he was yet penetrated with the difficulty of the situation, daily expecting an event decisive of the war. The movement which I had observed in the enemy's army corresponded with this expectation. His majesty informed me that he intended to keep me with him during the rest of the campaign.

After I left the Emperor, I hastened to Count Stadion, and found him quite overwhelmed and ready to give up the situation as lost. Count Stadion was one of those men of lively imagination and quick understanding, who are easily overcome by the impressions of the moment. Men of this sort always incline to extremes; for them there are no transitions, and since these nevertheless do exist, when they come before them instead of knowing how to wait, they too often act at random. The minister acknowledged that the policy which I propounded would have accomplished more, if it had been followed. Although I agreed with him on this point, I assured him that I ascribed the misfortunes which had fallen on our empire, and the extreme danger in which it was placed, not merely to any specified plan of operations: the true causes were rather the unhappy choice of the moment for the rising, and the inaction of the army after the victory of May 22. Count Stadion told me that he only waited the result of a battle on the left bank of the Danube to decide the question whether he should continue to serve or not—a battle which the Archduke Charles was expecting, and which in fact appeared to be immediately impending, to judge from the preparations made by the French army to effect the passage of the Danube.

July 4 passed in preparations for a battle. I was with the Emperor when an envoy from the Archduke came to inform him of the operations of the enemy, and that his Imperial Highness was determined to await the event with resolution. "Tell my brother," answered the Emperor to the adjutant,

"that I am of opinion that the enemy should not be allowed to cross in force, and that it would be well to drive those who had crossed into the river." This day there were only partial fights between the advanced troops. In the following night, under a sharp cannonade, the French army left the island, and went along the Lobau and crossed that arm of the Danube, farther down the river at Orth and two other points.

On the morning of July 5, I joined the Emperor on the battlefield, on which the fate of the Empire was to be decided. The battle was soon general, and we did not return to Wolkersdorf till nightfall, amid the blazing buildings which covered the Marchfeld. When we repaired to our post of observation in the gray of the early morning of the next day, we witnessed the apparently decisive result of the right wing of our army. About one o'clock in the afternoon, however, Count Colleredo, a general-adjutant of the Archduke's, came with the information to the Emperor, that his Imperial Highness had ordered the retreat of the army. Without losing his self-possession, the Emperor asked the messenger, whether the Archduke had only determined on the retreat, or whether it had actually commenced. When the Emperor heard that the army was already in full retreat, he said to the adjutant, "Very well;" and added, turning to me, "We shall have much to retrieve." His Majesty gave immediate orders to remove his headquarters to Znaim. We remained some time on the heights which commanded the broad plain of the Marchfeld, in front of Wolkersdorf, and then began our march, which brought us to Ernstbrunn, where we passed the night. On the following day we continued our retreat to Znaim.

V—MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

On the morning of July 8, 1809, I was sent for by the Emperor. He received me with the following words: "Count Stadion has just given in his resignation; I commit the department of Foreign Affairs to you in his place."

I begged his Majesty not to consider this appointment as definite. "Two reasons," said I, "move me to make this request: one is, that this is not a favorable moment for chang-

ing the ministry; the other, to my mind no less important, that I do not consider myself fit for this post. Neither my inclination nor my talents, so far as I know them, qualify me for the high functions which your Majesty wishes to confide to me. This feeling is not based on the difficulties of the moment, but on the knowledge which I have of myself. I do not think myself capable of steering the vessel of the state in so great an Empire; I do not wish to do as I have seen done by far more able men than I am. I should run the risk of advising badly, and my conscience does not allow me to bring this danger upon your Majesty and the state. Besides, the retirement of Count Stadion from the ministry on the second day after the battle of Wagram would have an importance as seeming to imply an abandonment by your Majesty of the cause for which you have already made so many sacrifices; I should regard this step as a great mistake."

With the patience which never left him in the greatest crises—and what monarch has gone through more than the Emperor Francis?—with a strength of mind and firmness of character which comprise all the gifts most valuable for princes who are called to govern, the Emperor answered: "What you say of Stadion's resignation under present circumstances is quite true; but he has insisted, and I have accepted his resignation, because you cannot urge a man to remain in a position which he wishes to leave, when it calls upon him to administer important business. As to the difficulties which you raise about taking the office yourself, the same rule does not apply to you; far from being deterred by the considerations you mention, I am confirmed by them in my choice. I am less afraid of men who doubt their own capacity than of those who think themselves fit for everything. I count on the knowledge you have of the difficulties of the position, and on your patriotism. Confer, then, with Count Stadion on the most suitable method of making the change of ministry; and come back and inform me when you have agreed what to do."

"I will do what your Majesty commands," I replied; "still, I beg your Majesty to believe that my disinclination has nothing to do with the present crisis, but rests on quite other grounds; and in case Count Stadion will not on my representation remain in office, may I beg your Majesty to grant me a

favor, namely, that your Majesty will promise to dismiss me on the day when your Majesty sees me going wrong?''

''That I promise you,'' answered the Emperor, ''but I hope that this contingency will not occur to either of us.''

I went immediately to Count Stadion, whom I found immovable in his resolution to retire. Great determination was one of the characteristic features of this minister: and if this quality had not been marred by a most dangerous precipitation, the war of 1809 would not have taken place under such auspices as it did. As I saw that my efforts to make him change his resolution were fruitless, I turned our conversation in a direction in which Count Stadion's high feeling did not allow me to fear a defeat. I appealed to his feeling of duty, and pointed out the consequences which his sudden resignation must have. The result was that we agreed to propose to the Emperor that he should order the Archduke Charles to continue the retreat of the army under his command towards Bohemia, and that Count Stadion should remain as minister with the Archduke. His Majesty should put himself at the head of the army in Hungary; and I should accompany the Emperor, performing *ad interim* the functions of a Minister of Foreign Affairs in attendance on his person. Lastly, we agreed that the actual retirement of Count Stadion from the ministry should be delayed till the end of the war, on the issue of which it should depend. We went both together to the Emperor, who was satisfied with the arrangement.

I here avow with all sincerity that there was nothing in me to counterbalance the load of responsibility which was laid upon me but the feeling of duty. Free from the stimulus of ambition, as I have been all my life, I felt only the weight of the fetters which were to rob me of my personal freedom, and was, with more sensitiveness than was natural to me, weighed down under the influence of my new position.

Soon after this conclusion had been arrived at, the Emperor left Znaim, and I accompanied him to Hungary. We took the road over the Jablunka Pass, and went straight to Komorn. Count Stadion attached himself to the Archduke Charles. I traveled from Znaim to Komorn in the Emperor's carriage, and I made use of the time to lay before his Majesty my view of the present position of affairs. From this prince's

calm and just line of thought, from the impression made on me by his strong and candid mind, I was convinced that in all important questions my views would always be in harmony with his, and that his great qualities would ever insure me the support without which a minister, be his views ever so good, can make no certain plan and carry out no project with prospect of success. We examined the situation of the empire with thorough impartiality; we reviewed the prospects which the war still presented, as well as those promised by a peace concluded under the most unhappy auspices.

Shortly after the arrival of the Emperor at Komorn we received the details of the battle of Znaim, and the news of a truce between the two armies. At the same time there came to me a proposal from Count Champagny, for the opening of negotiations for peace.

I found the Emperor inclined to the reception of this offer, and I therefore settled with the French Minister that our meeting should take place at the town of Altenburg, in the province of Wieselburg. On this occasion there arose a singular difficulty in a matter of form. I did not know what title to take in order to address my answer to Count Champagny in the third person. My name alone would be of no authority. I was no longer an ambassador, and not yet a minister. I informed the Emperor of the difficulty, and he ruled that I should take the title of Minister of State.

As the town of Altenburg was chosen for the negotiations, and as it lay within the French line of demarcation according to the Treaty of Znaim, it was declared neutral. The Emperor took up his abode at Totis, where soon afterwards Prince John Liechtenstein, commander-in-chief of the army, had his headquarters. This prince had taken the command from Archduke Charles, who had gone back to Teschen. General Count Bubna held the office of military commissary with Napoleon. Since I was entrusted with the functions of Chief Plenipotentiary for the peace negotiations, I begged the Emperor to appoint an influential military officer as second Plenipotentiary. The choice fell on General Count Nugent, who during the campaign had acted as quartermaster-general to the corps commanded by the Archduke John.

The knowledge which I had gained of the men with whom I

was to negotiate such important interests did not allow me to consider the negotiation as a serious matter on Napoleon's part. He wanted to get his army into condition again, after the successes bought by such great sacrifices. He knew that the Austrian forces also needed to be recruited; if he had not felt that a halt was needed in the operations, he would have followed up his advantage. I did not expect therefore anything more from the Altenburg Conference than that it would either lead to the renewal of hostilities or be concluded by a peace dictated by Napoleon in his usual manner. The instructions which I took with me to the place of meeting were of a simple nature. My task was limited to exposing the moral position, that the Emperor should be forced to a definite conclusion, whether it were in favor of concluding the war or of carrying it on.

Since I do not intend to enter here into the details of this pretended negotiation, during which both armies were drawn up opposite each other, and only engaged in reënforcing themselves as much as possible, I will confine myself to mentioning one fact which characterized the political action of Napoleon and the servility of his agents.

I opened the negotiations with the request that they might be divided into formal sittings, conducted by Protocols and into simple conversations without anything of the kind. Count Champagny said he was not authorized to use protocols, still he was ready to inform his master of my request. Although the distance was so short which separated the place from Napoleon's headquarters at Schönbrunn, days passed by without any answer from him. When at last it came, it was in the negative. I now explained that I did not call the conversations between Plenipotentiaries a negotiation, and that they could only prepare the way for such. In this way the discussions went on for about fourteen days, when suddenly, in consequence of the arrival of a courier from Schönbrunn, Count Champagny sent me a note, in which he informed me that the Emperor, his master, having taken into consideration the advantages which would be gained by adopting the proposed form, not only agreed to the drawing up of Protocols, but also wished that the Protocols already prepared might be laid before me for approval, in order that the conferences

with a view to peace already held might not be lost time. There were, in fact, a number of reports of conferences which were never held inclosed with the note of the French Plenipotentiary. I answered Count Champagny, that I was not accustomed to make use of any other pen than my own in the expression of my thoughts on so grave an occasion, and should not condescend to put my signature to worthless documents; but I was ready to consider the so-called Protocols as containing what had been said by the French Plenipotentiaries; although with the emphatic proviso, that my words therein should be replaced by authentic documents, which I was ready to supply. On this declaration Count Champagny withdrew his proposal. The false Protocols contained only reports which were written in a spirit which Napoleon permitted in order that, in the event of hostilities being renewed, their character might be changed into that of manifestoes. I asked Count Champagny how he could take upon himself to make me such a proposal, which the plainest common sense must know to be a futile and compromising attempt. He excused himself with the assurance that it was not he who had thought of it; the pretended Protocols were dictated by Napoleon himself, and he must admit that he neither had said to me anything of the matter of the acts in question nor had heard anything like it from my mouth. "Napoleon," I remarked to him, "has the power of putting words into your mouth which your position prevents you perhaps from denying; but what he can do with you, he cannot do to me—he may conquer kingdoms, but never my conscience!"

Several days more passed in the inaction described, and my anticipations with regard to Napoleon's proceedings were verified.

Count Bubna, who, as already mentioned, was Military Commissary at Napoleon's headquarters, was ordered by him to request the Emperor Francis to send Prince John Liechtenstein to Vienna. "The diplomatists," added Napoleon, "do not know how to get through an affair like the present; we soldiers understand one another better. Let the Emperor send Prince Liechtenstein to me, and we will end the matter in four-and-twenty hours. I will tell him what I wish and what I desire from the Emperor; and what I want he will

grant me, because he is upright and wise. I desire—not the destruction of Austria—but its consolidation. What I said against the Emperor Francis at the beginning of the war was nothing but a phrase; such things are allowable before a battle, they vanish with the smoke of the cannon."

I was informed of the sending for Field-Marshal Prince Liechtenstein, through an adjutant who preceded him, with the request to make known his arrival at Vienna. The Prince was close behind him, and stopped to see me at Altenburg. He brought me a letter from the Emperor Francis, telling me that this mission had no other object but to arrive at last at a knowledge of Napoleon's intentions; the Field-Marshal had orders to listen to everything, but not to enter into a discussion on any subject. When the Prince had informed me of the instructions he had received, I said to him, "If I had been aware of your mission, rather than you should have passed the outposts of the French army I would have taken upon myself to request you to wait, till I had spoken to the Emperor. We are no longer in Altenburg; you are within reach of the hostile army, and must go on. But I tell you beforehand that of two things one will happen: either Napoleon will lead you to do something that will compromise our cause; or he will prevent you from returning to your post. The army must have its commanders; this Napoleon knows, and has drawn you away from it. He will either constrain the Emperor to conclude a peace which he ought not to conclude, or he will deprive him of the means of carrying on the war." The Prince, who was much agitated by what I said, declared he was ready to go back to Totis. I showed him that he must perform the commission he had undertaken, but must make every effort not to depart from it.

I feel bound in conscience to give here some account of Prince John Liechtenstein, one of the noblest characters of this sad time. He was a born soldier; he had not the qualities which make a statesman. With overflowing zeal for what is right, gifted with unusual faculties of mind, and a courage proof against every trial; a warm patriot, ready for any sacrifice, but without that balance which is necessary to learn the true value of men and things: he had already, in the year 1805, succumbed to the power which Napoleon was able to

exercise in so high a degree upon those whom his interest required him to influence. Prince John saw in Napoleon only the mere soldier; in this quality he thought he was his equal. He deceived himself, and could not escape from the craft of a man who united in himself the most different qualities in the most extraordinary manner.

When the Field-Marshal had returned to Altenburg, I went to Count Champagny and informed him that as several days must pass without anything being done, I thought of going back to Totis, but that I was ready to return to Altenburg whenever the first news in consequence of the arrival of Prince Liechtenstein was received from Vienna at the French headquarters. "This news," I continued, "will, however, announce the breaking off of the Altenburg negotiations." Count Champagny would not admit my pre-supposition. I hastened the next morning to the Emperor, and went to Totis to Count Stadion, who had arrived there from Bohemia a short time before.

I did not conceal my fears from the Emperor; and was convinced that in sending for Prince Liechtenstein, the Emperor had yielded only from confidence in the engagements entered into by Napoleon, and in consequence of a cabinet council which had decided in favor of the attempt. Before his departure from Totis, Prince Liechtenstein had, in the fulfillment of the duties required of him, made all preparations for the resumption of hostilities. Therefore I had only to maintain an observant and passive attitude; Count Stadion had consented also, in case of a rupture, again to lead the Ministry.

On the day after my return to the Emperor, I received the notice from Count Champagny that Napoleon had just summoned him to Vienna; in consequence of which, the Altenburg negotiation must be considered as broken off.

Several days passed without any news from Vienna. Prince Liechtenstein informed the Emperor of his pleasant reception by Napoleon, with the addition that, nevertheless, Napoleon had refused to go into the subject of his summons, and referred him rather to the Duke of Bassano (Maret), head of the personal cabinet of the Emperor.

I concluded from this that my other foreboding would

shortly be fulfilled. From this time I directed all my attention to the preparations for war. The means we had at command were immense. The demonstrations of the Russian army on the Galician side gave me no uneasiness. I encouraged the Emperor only to look forward. The patience of the Emperor was exhausted; his Majesty resolved on the recall of Prince Liechtenstein, and I was commissioned to make the necessary arrangements and preparations.

On October 14, towards evening, as I was walking along the road from Totis towards Vienna, I saw carriages approaching, which I knew to be those of Prince John Liechtenstein. As soon as the Prince saw me, he stopped the carriage, jumped out, and said, "I bring you peace, and my head too: the Emperor will dispose at his pleasure of both."

This is what had happened in Vienna. Napoleon, as before mentioned, had declined to speak to Prince Liechtenstein himself on the matter for which he came, and had referred him to the Duke of Bassano. The Duke, for his part, declared to the Field-Marshal that he was not Minister of Foreign Affairs, and that he must wait the arrival of Count Champagny, whom the Emperor had appointed to carry on the negotiation. Prince Liechtenstein persisted in his protestation that he was not commissioned with any negotiation. The Duke of Bassano paid no regard to what he said. "You will talk over the affair with Champagny," said he, "and easily come to an understanding with a man so pacific in his nature and so thoroughly acquainted with the Emperor's mind." On the remark of the Field-Marshal that the place for peace negotiations was Altenburg, the Duke of Bassano replied that the Emperor, his master, had recalled his Plenipotentiary from that place, because it was not possible to carry on negotiations in two places! Prince Liechtenstein on that declared he should leave Vienna at once. "You cannot do that," replied the duke: "the Emperor would regard it as a sign of breaking the truce; by doing so, you would compromise the fate of the army, and also of your country: and what is needed to avert from you so fearful a responsibility? A short delay, to learn what Napoleon thinks of proposing to the Emperor your master!" Finding himself in this dilemma, Prince Liechtenstein decided on remaining.

After the arrival of Count Champagny, the conferences began, under the name of Preliminaries, which were concluded on the night of October 13 and 14 with the signing of a document which the French Minister called the "Project for a Treaty of Peace," to be brought before the Emperor of Austria. After signing this document, which Prince Liechtenstein thought had this and no other meaning, he returned home at 5 o'clock in the morning; he had ordered his post-horses for 10 o'clock, when he suddenly at daybreak heard the firing of cannons, and on asking what this firing meant, was told it announced the signing of peace in the capital of Austria. He wished to make Napoleon answer for this on the spot, but Napoleon had just left Schönbrunn with all his retinue!

This is the history of the Peace of Vienna of October 14, 1809, and is known to only a limited circle: a Treaty of Peace full of unworthy artifices, having no foundation in international rights.

The Emperor's decision under the circumstances could not be doubted. Without compromising himself and his Empire in the most dangerous manner, he could not reject the conclusion of a peace which had been already announced, amid the rejoicings of the people, in the capital and in more than a third part of the country still remaining to him. The Emperor ratified the treaty.

By this event the provisional character of the functions assigned to me at once terminated. I appeared now in the character of a Minister of Foreign Affairs; and frankly admit that I took possession of the portfolio with more self-confidence than I had expected in the previous July. What had just taken place disclosed a side of Napoleon to me which placed him far lower in my eyes; and before my conscience the cause I had to uphold rose in like measure.

At the end of November, I came with the Emperor back to Vienna, and alighted at the Chancellor's Palace.

The conditions of the act of October 14 were loyally carried out in all directions. The places of the Empire occupied by the French forces and those of the Confederation of the Rhine were vacated, and the war contribution discharged within the appointed time. The return of the Emperor to his capital

was like a triumphal entry. The populace there, as in the provinces, did not look beyond the present moment, satisfied with being relieved from the presence of an enemy who carried refinement, in making use of all the resources of the country, to the very highest degree. Napoleon, in the eyes of Europe, passed for an irresistible power, under the yoke of which all must bow. The feeling of the masses was no longer to escape this fate, but to lighten the burden as much as possible. My thoughts, however, soared higher. Under the load of enormous responsibility, I found only two points on which it seemed possible to rest, the immovable strength of character of the Emperor Francis, and my own conscience.

The results of the rising of Austria in the year 1809 were most destructive for the Empire. The (so-called) Peace of Vienna had bound the kingdom with a circle of iron, deprived it of its communication with the Adriatic, and from Brody, the north-east point of junction with Russia, to its south-east boundary adjoining the Ottoman Empire, encircled it with countries which were under the scepter of Napoleon, or subject to his direct influence. The Empire accordingly lost all freedom of movement; and the conqueror had done all that lay in his power to hinder any future development of strength, by a secret article in the Treaty of Peace, which limited the maximum of the Austrian forces to a hundred and fifty thousand men.

Called to the hard task of defending the political existence of the Empire under such adverse circumstances, I compared the position of the European continent and the peculiar situation of the Austrian States, and, weighing the evils which pressed upon each, carefully watched for the preponderating influence.

I considered the Revolution, as it burst forth in France in 1789, as the starting-point of all the misfortunes of Europe, and I clearly perceived that a military despotism, which found its highest expression in Napoleon, was its inevitable result. If the wars occasioned by the Revolution had preserved Germany and Austria from the infection of social theories, during the twenty years which had elapsed between 1789 and 1809—for nations are averse to adopt as benefits those doctrines which are presented to them by the force of

arms—I at the same time recognized in Napoleon himself a barrier against the encroachments of anarchical theories in France and in those countries upon which lay the weight of his iron arm. Social questions, therefore, I placed in the background, but in the very first rank I placed the preservation of what remained of the Austrian Empire, even after its unsuccessful campaigns. That Napoleon, in his lust of power on the European continent, had already overstepped the limits of the possible—of this I had not the slightest doubt. I foresaw that neither he nor his undertakings would escape the consequences of rashness and extravagance. The *when* and the *how* I could not pretend to determine. Thus my reason pointed out to me the direction which I had to take in order not to interfere with the natural development of the situation, and to keep open for Austria the chances which the greatest of all powers, the power of circumstances, might offer sooner or later (under the strong government of its monarch) for the much-threatened prosperity of the Empire. As it was beyond everything necessary to await the development of events after the return of Napoleon to his capital, I made use of the leisure so gained to go to Vienna and make myself acquainted with the requirements of the departments which had been entrusted to me. I gave the Chancellery an inner organization more fitted to the times; in doing which I had before my mind the former organization under Prince Kaunitz.

In accordance with my proposal, the Emperor Francis had appointed Prince Schwarzenberg, Ambassador in France: a better choice could not have been made, as events proved.

Neither before nor after the conclusion of the Vienna Peace had a single word been exchanged between Napoleon and the Austrian Cabinet regarding the design of the Emperor of the French as to his marriage. We were aware of the negotiations with the Russian Court, which Napoleon had entered into for a marriage with one of the Grand-Duchesses, and we also knew that Napoleon had decided to dissolve his marriage with the Empress Josephine, that marriage being without canonical authority. But we were so little aware of his intentions with regard to an Austrian Archduchess, that when the first indications of it came to us from the expressions of M. de Laborde, we regarded it as a fantastic dream, and only

attributed a serious character to the matter when Napoleon himself, on the occasion of a ball, asked my wife, who had remained behind in Paris, to make known his intentions to me.

At a masked ball, at Cambacérès', to which my wife had received a very pressing invitation, a mask, in whom she immediately recognized Napoleon, took hold of her arm, and led her into a private room at the end of the suite of apartments. After some jokes of no importance, Napoleon asked her, whether she thought that the Archduchess Marie Louise would accept his hand, and whether the Emperor, her father, would agree to this alliance. My wife, very much surprised by this question, assured him that it was impossible for her to answer it. On that, Napoleon asked further whether she, in the place of the Archduchess, would bestow her hand upon him. My wife assured him she would refuse him. "You are cruel!" said the Emperor to her; "write to your husband, and ask him what he thinks of the matter." My wife refused to do this, and pointed out that Prince Schwarzenberg was the organ through which he should approach the Imperial Court. Neither did she delay to inform the Ambassador, who was present at the ball, of what had passed between her and the Emperor.

The following morning, Prince Eugène made his appearance at Prince Schwarzenberg's, and in "the name of the Emperor and with the knowledge of his mother, the Empress Josephine," he made the same offer, which, the Ambassador explained, he could only receive *ad referendum.*

As soon as the courier brought me this news, I repaired to the Emperor. "Your Majesty," said I, "is here placed in a situation in which the Ruler and the Father can alone say Yes or No. One or the other must be spoken by you, for a doubtful or hesitating answer is not possible."

The Emperor collected himself for a moment, and then asked me what I should do in his place.

"There are cases in the life of states as with private persons," I answered, "when a third person is not able to put himself in the place of another, on whom the responsibility of a decision rests. These cases are especially those in which calculation alone is not sufficient to lead to a decision. Your

Majesty is Ruler and Father—to you alone it belongs to consider what is your duty."

"I shall leave the decision in my daughter's hands," cried the Emperor, warmly; "for I will never constrain her, and I desire, before I consult my duty as a monarch, to know what is her wish in the matter. Find the Archduchess, and let me know what she says to you. I will not myself speak to her on the subject, lest it should seem as if I wished to influence her decision."

I went at once to the Archduchess Marie Louise, and laid the matter before her, without circumlocution or fine phrases, either for or against the proposal. The Archduchess listened with her usual calmness, and after a moment's reflection, asked me, "What does my father wish?"

"The Emperor," I replied, "has commissioned me to interrogate your Imperial Highness as to your decision in a matter so important for the destiny of your whole life. Do not ask what the Emperor wishes: tell me what you wish."

"I wish only what it is my duty to wish," answered the Archduchess; "where the interest of the Empire is concerned that interest must be consulted, and not my will. Ask my father to consult his duty as a ruler, and to subordinate to that any interests connected with my person."

When I reported this result of my mission to the Emperor, he said to me, with that perfect openness which was usual to him in the most difficult circumstances, "I am not surprised at what you tell me from my daughter; I know she is too good for me to expect her to do otherwise. Whilst you have been with her I have been thinking how to decide. My consent to the marriage would secure to the Empire some years of political peace, which I can devote to the healing of its wounds. All my powers are devoted to the welfare of my people, I cannot, therefore, hesitate in my decision. Send a courier to Paris, and say, that I accept the offer for the hand of my daughter, but with the express reservation, that on neither side shall any condition be attached to it; there are sacrifices which must not be contaminated with anything approaching to a bargain."

This is the truth with regard to the marriage of Napoleon with the Archduchess Marie Louise.

When Napoleon sounded Prince Schwarzenberg whether any concessions on his side would be agreeable to the Emperor, the Ambassador was in a position to express himself in the same sense as the Emperor himself had done at previous times.

One question which naturally had a great interest for the public was the divorce of Napoleon and Josephine. For the Church this question did not exist, and therefore not for the Emperor. Napoleon had contracted a civil marriage with the express understanding that the union could be dissolved; in the eyes of the Church, therefore, it was not a valid marriage. Indeed, had it been otherwise, the scheme could not have been entertained for a moment. The dissolution of the first marriage, so called, had only, therefore, the value of a mere formality such as the French civil law required.

That this event, however, drew a line between the past and the present is quite evident. I felt myself called to direct my gravest attention to the future: and I think that I fulfilled this duty to the best of my power.

VI—SPECIAL MISSION TO PARIS

THE step which Napoleon had taken must have had a motive, and I now considered it my next and most important task to discover and follow up the Emperor's reasons. Napoleon's union with the Austrian Imperial family was doubtless the result of some calculation. What could be its aim?

Will the Imperial conqueror put his sword in its sheath and build up the future of France, and of his family, on the principles of internal order and external peace?

Or does the soldier-Prince desire, with the help of Austria, to found a dynasty, and at the same time continue his system of conquest?

The answers to these questions would decide our action in the future. The first of these queries did not seem to me, from the character of Napoleon, to be probable, the other rested on such impracticable suppositions that I could not build on it with any certainty, however well it corresponded with the habits of that prince. I therefore decided to request the Emperor to allow me to go to Paris at the same time as the new Empress, and to remain there till I could discover the

true state of the case. The Emperor agreed to my proposal, and forthwith I prepared to carry it out.

Marshal Berthier, on whom the title of Prince of Neufchâtel and Wagram had been conferred, was sent to Vienna with the proposal for the hand of the Archduchess Marie Louise. Archduke Charles, entrusted with Napoleon's Procuration, represented the bridegroom at the altar, and the formal giving up of the Empress took place at Braunau, where she was received by the Queen of Naples, Napoleon's sister. The Austrian people took the event with that feeling which, after long wars and boundless sacrifices, greets every prospect of peace as a blessing; they looked upon it as a pledge of peace. Neither the Emperor nor I went so far in our hopes; mine were limited to the obtaining of an interval of quiet for the recruiting of our resources for the possibility of a necessary defense of the interests of the Empire.

In order not to take the same road as the Empress Marie Louise, who went by the south of Germany and Strasburg to Paris, I chose the road by Metz to Compiègne, whither I had been invited by Napoleon. At that place I was joined by Prince Schwarzenberg and my wife, who had arrived there from Paris. The members of the Imperial family were all assembled in the palace which the Emperor had had prepared with the greatest magnificence to receive his new consort. At the moment when I arrived, Napoleon had just left it to meet the Empress: I was not, therefore, received by him till after their first meeting.

Napoleon welcomed me with visible signs of satisfaction. He expressed his gratification at the conclusion of the event which at this moment occupied him entirely; he touched on all the details of the course of the negotiation, and came back to the point, that we must omit nothing which could make the happy event of the moment as sweet and pleasant as possible. He spoke to me of an entire forgetfulness of the past, of a happy and peaceful epoch, at which we had now arrived, of the impossibility that anything should disturb the natural relations between us; on which I expressed the wish that during my residence in Paris I might venture to speak on many subjects of great importance for us, and of common utility for the two empires.

The ecclesiastical details with respect to the affair of the divorce brought the conversation to the existing dispute with the Holy See, and I felt myself called upon not to refuse our good offices between Pope Pius VII. and Napoleon. That this step, in the main, led to no result does not prevent me from mentioning it here.

Napoleon spoke too of the last war, and during this conversation many interesting admissions fell from him. "If," so he said among other things, "in the month of September you had recommenced hostilities and beaten me, I should have been *lost;*" and when he saw that he had said too much, he withdrew the word *"lost"* and replaced it by "in great difficulties." But I would not let it pass, but assured him I held by his first expression, and this conviction had much strengthened me in my attitude at Altenburg. I thanked him personally for having excused me at the time of the negotiations at Vienna, and assured him that I should never have concluded the last peace. "Well, what would you have done then?" interrupted Napoleon.

"I would have made a far better peace, and one more in correspondence with our true strength; if not, then war."

"War!" said the Emperor, taking up the word; "then you would have done wrong: it would have been difficult to drive me out of Vienna; but a better peace than your negotiators at Schönbrunn succeeded in obtaining—that I believe."

Accounts had just arrived which announced that Napoleon's marriage was very ill received at St. Petersburg. I was not at all surprised at this, though somewhat disturbed; for what we wished, I remarked, was simply peace and quiet, and it did not fall within our plans that Russia should be involved.

"What do you mean by that?" asked Napoleon.

"Russia is afraid," I answered, "and acts under the influence of fear: she is afraid of France, she fears our relations with France, and will quarrel out of sheer uneasiness and anxiety."

"Do not be anxious," interrupted Napoleon, "if the Russians try to commit themselves. I will act as if I did not understand them." With that he expatiated at length on his

relations with that Power, from which I saw that much wisdom and care on the side of Austria would be necessary to prevent a rupture with Russia.

After a short stay in the Imperial Palace at Compiègne, I betook myself to Paris, where the Emperor had placed the Hôtel of Marshel Ney, with a complete household, at my disposal, which, however, I only used on very particular occasions. I did not wish to burden the court with my family, so I generally resided in the house in the Chaussée d'Antin, which my wife had occupied since my departure from Paris in 1809.

The Empress Marie Louise was received by the French public with the same feeling which the marriage had called forth in Austria. France was tired of war. After so many disastrous battles, conquerors and conquered joined in longing and hoping for a final settlement. I saw proofs of this in all classes of the people, and more particularly in Napoleon's own family.

In the subsequent conversations which I had with the Emperor, he was warm in his declarations of good-will to Austria. As a special sign of his favor, Napoleon proposed to Prince Schwarzenberg (then Austrian Ambassador in Paris) and me to abolish the mediatization of our families, and to enroll them as sovereign members of the Rhenish Confederation, a proposal which we both, in consideration of our official position, declined in the most polite manner.

In my intercourse with the Emperor, we took up again the thread of the conversation, so to speak, where it had been broken off before the war. I had not come, however, to study the past, but to get a glimpse of the future; and since I wished to do this as quickly as possible, I one day remarked to the Emperor that my stay in Paris could not be of much longer duration. "Your Majesty," said I to him, "sent me as a prisoner to Austria: I come back to Paris a free man, but yet not free from difficult duties. Loaded as I am with an enormous responsibility, I have my duties in Vienna to fulfill. The Emperor Francis wished me to accompany his daughter into France; I have come by his orders, but it must be evident to you that my wish goes beyond

this, and I would gladly find a guiding principle for my political action in a more remote future."

"I understand you," answered Napoleon: "your wish corresponds with my own. Stay with us a few weeks, and you will leave us with satisfaction."

These words might have led me to hope that my residence in Paris would not be much prolonged, but I knew Napoleon too well to build anything on a mere probability. Instead of four weeks, I was detained in Paris for quite half a year. On my departure from Vienna the Emperor had confided the direction of the Chancellery to my father, Prince Francis George von Metternich. Since Paris was at that time the center of affairs, my absence from Vienna could only cause any alteration in the carrying on of my department if my representative in the office deviated from my own views. With my father there could be no question of this; and, seeing that no injury to public business would be connected with my distance from the capital, I kept to my determination not to leave Napoleon before I had attained the true object of my journey to France. The sequence of this narrative will show that I gained my object.

In May, Napoleon conducted his wife to Brussels. The Emperor had invited me to accompany him to Cambrai, so that I was an eye-witness of the enthusiasm with which the young empress was everywhere received by the people. At St.-Quentin, Napoleon particularly wished that I should be present at an audience to which he had invited the authorities of the place. "I wish to show you," said he, "how I am wont to speak to these people." I saw that the Emperor was anxious that I should perceive how many-sided was his administrative knowledge.

After our return from this journey, the festivities were continued which Paris had prepared for the new Empress. Chief of these was the ball that was given in honor of the marriage by Prince Schwarzenberg, and which terminated so fatally.

I busied myself with negotiations for the execution of some decrees in the last Peace, and brought them with ease to the solution we desired. Napoleon evidently wished to give us a proof of his good will; and it was my business to

draw from this feeling some advantage in favor of certain affairs of detail committed to my care.

But notwithstanding this, the great interest which had brought me to Paris was supreme in my thoughts, and served as a guiding star in all my actions. A veil was spread over the future of Europe, which I longed to raise; to this end I must secure a freedom of action which would have been hampered by a closer intimacy with the conqueror.

Therefore I remained impenetrable to all the acts of attention which Napoleon knew how to heap on those from whom he desired some benefit. I did not withdraw from intercourse with the court: I had the freest access to it, of which, however, I only made use, in regard to the Empress Marie Louise, with the most careful reserve. In the subjoined notes [5] I have communicated some details connected with this

[5] I. *Conversation with Marie Louise at the Tuileries.*—About two months after his marriage, Napoleon asked me why I never went to see the Empress Marie Louise, except on her reception days, or on other occasions of more or less ceremony. I replied that I knew of no reason for acting differently; on the contrary, there were many reasons for acting as I had. If I went beyond the usual routine, I should give rise to idle talk: people would tax me with conniving at some intrigue; I should injure the Empress, and depart from my proper mission. "Bah!" interrupted Napoleon, "I wish you to see the Empress; go to her to-morrow morning, I will tell her to expect you."

The next morning I repaired to the Tuileries; I found Napoleon with the Empress. The conversation ran on ordinary topics, when Napoleon said to me, "I wish the Empress to speak openly to you, and confide to you what she thinks of her position. You are her friend; she should have no secrets from you." At the end of this speech Napoleon closed the door of the room, put the key in his pocket, and disappeared by another door. I inquired of the Empress what was the meaning of this scene: she addressed the same question to me. Seeing that she had not been prepared by Napoleon, I guessed that he wished to enable me to receive from the mouth of the Empress herself satisfactory ideas of her domestic relations, in order that I might give a favorable account to her father, the Emperor. The Empress was of the same opinion. We were together for more than an hour, then Napoleon came back smiling. "Well," said he to us, "have you had a good talk? Has the Empress said much ill of me? Has she laughed or wept? I do not ask you to tell me. You two have secrets which do not concern a third person, even though that third person is the husband."

We continued talking in the same tone of pleasant raillery, and I took my leave. On the following day Napoleon sought an opportunity of speaking to me. "What did the Empress say to you yesterday?" said he. "You said," I replied, "that our conversation should not be known to a third person: allow me to keep it a secret." "The Empress will have said," interrupted Napoleon, "that she is happy with me, that she

which may serve to explain to you the character of Napoleon.[6]

During his conversations with me, which lasted sometimes for hours, the Emperor Napoleon spoke with great openness of his plans for government and organization with respect to France, and only touched on the domain of politics for the purpose of historical elucidation.

One of his favorite schemes at this time was the idea of collecting all the archives of Europe, in Paris. There should be, so he said to me, a grand edifice, erected on the *Place* between the Military School and the *Invalides*, constructed entirely of stone and iron, so as to be fire-proof. This building should contain all the archives of the European States. On my remarking that he must begin by getting possession of the archives before he arranged for their reception, Napoleon answered in the most frank manner, "Why should I not have them? Will not all the powers hasten to send their archives to a place so perfectly safe? Without any doubt they will be inclined to do so in the double interests

has no complaint to make. I hope you will tell this to your Emperor, he will believe you sooner than any one else."

II. *Counsel to be given to the Empress Marie Louise.*—In the course of the summer of the year 1810, Napoleon detained me one day, after his levée at St.-Cloud. When we were alone, he said to me, in an embarrassed tone, that I could do him a service.

"It concerns the Empress," said he. "She is young, without experience, and she does not know the ways of this country, nor the character of the French. I have placed the Duchess of Montebello in attendance on her. She is all one could wish, but is sometimes thoughtless. Yesterday, for example, walking in the park with the Empress, she presented to her one of her cousins. The Empress spoke to him, which was wrong; if she allows young men, cousins and so forth, to be introduced to her, she will very soon become the prey of intriguers. Every one in France has always some favor to ask. The Empress will be beset, and, without the power of doing good, she will be exposed to constant annoyance." I said to Napoleon that I agreed with him, but could not understand why he had taken me into his confidence. "It is," said Napoleon, "because I wish you to speak of this matter to the Empress."

I expressed my surprise that he had not himself performed this duty. "The advice," said I, "is good, it is wise, and the Empress is too right-minded not to appreciate it." "I prefer," interrupted Napoleon, "that you should undertake this commission. The Empress is young, she might think I was going to be a severe husband; you are her father's minister, and the friend of her childhood; what you say will have more effect upon her than anything I could say."

[6] The manuscript here breaks off suddenly. What follows is the text of the "*clew to the explanation of my manner of thought and negotiation.*"

of safety and of science. Only think, yourself, of the immense advantages which history would derive from this! Of course, each State must have the right of placing its documents under the care of keepers of its archives, who would live close to their papers. It would be free to each one to keep legal copies of them. What an immense advantage it would be to avoid distances; one would only have to take two or three steps across a corridor, to draw from the historical treasures of France, Austria, Rome, &c."

I could not restrain an incredulous smile, and begged him not to overlook the difficulties which this project would meet with from other States.

"Well," rejoined Napoleon, "see what narrow ideas the statesmen of Europe have, and do not know how to get rid of! I shall carry out my project; the plans for the building are in preparation!" And with that he took me into his study, where he showed me a plan of Paris, on which the edifice in question was drawn. According to the ground plan, this palace of the archives was to include eight inner courts.

Our other conversations on political questions bore the stamp of academical enquiries rather than the discussion of practical matters. On meeting again a man so richly gifted, it was most surprising to me to see what thoroughly erroneous ideas he had of England, her material resources and her moral character. He would not allow of contrary views, and sought the key to them in prejudices which he reprobated. That he would bring England to reason by means of the Continental blockade, this he regarded as a mathematical certainty. He knew the state of Germany exactly; and on the internal relations of Austria he expressed views which were far from being unsound.

However great the interest of learning the thoughts and views of this wonderful man on the most different subjects, this did not afford me any satisfactory hints in explanation of his plans for the immediate future. The victorious progress of the Russian arms in Turkey gave me, however, a favorable opportunity of sounding Napoleon on the Turkish question. In repeated conversations on this subject, Napoleon began to lift the veil behind which his thoughts were

concealed. Amongst other things, he said that he should not oppose the establishment of the Russians in the Danubian Principalities, which, besides, were more Russian than Turkish; Erfurt prevented him from doing so. But this Russian success will be the cause of an alliance between France and Austria: a political alliance grounded on common interests, far more important than a mere family connection, such as now existed between the two courts. An advance of the Russians on the right bank of the Danube he would in no case put up with, nor with a Russian protectorate over Servia. Belgrade belongs to Austria. "You must try to take this place by stratagem, or get the Servians themselves to give it up to you. Begin by using it as a depot; once there, they will not turn you out."

In the month of September Napoleon first began to let out his views in our conversations.

It was at the time that, in consequence of the choice of the successor to the Swedish throne, and the constant increase of the prohibitions against trade and pressure on the Continental States, a tension in the relations with Russia was everywhere apparent, and Napoleon's thoughts regarding his future attitude to this Northern Power began to take a definite shape, which crept out in his conversations with me.

He spoke of the anxieties and embarrassments which the choice of the new Crown Prince of Sweden had brought about. When I said that he must have foreseen the result, which I held to be more a Franco-Russian than a Swedish-Russian complication—in fact, it must have fallen in with his plans, for he could have prevented it, Napoleon assured me he had remained quite neutral, and had allowed the nation to choose. A French marshal on the throne of Gustavus Adolphus would, besides, have been the finest trick any one could have played on England.

On September 20, under the pretext of the latest news from Turkey, Napoleon detained me in St.-Cloud. He expatiated on the possibility or probability of a peace between Turkey and Russia. Then he came again to speak of the elevation of the Prince of Ponte Corvo as successor to the Swedish throne.

"I had news," said the Emperor, "from St. Petersburg, which proved that this event was received there as a thing that must be; it did not work well, but it was taken in silence." Then he went on: "I consider the Swedish affair as a more or less distant motive for war with Russia. That it should not excite envy in the latter is impossible. I shall have war with Russia on grounds which lie beyond human possibilities, because they are rooted in the case itself."

"The time will soon approach—and I am very far from hastening it either by my wishes or my deeds—when hostilities will be inevitable. What part will you play then? I speak to you of all these things not at all in an official manner, and still less with the intention of making a proposal to you, but simply as we talk over any circumstance foreign to both of us. On this occasion you must either unite with France or you must side with Russia, and in the latter case you would remain neutral. The course last named will lead you to nothing, nor would it be the means of raising ourself; and if you attempt a merely nominal neutrality, in order to join the strongest party after the battle, you will get small thanks from them and small profit for yourself out of such a course."

"I consider," continued Napoleon, "that what now constitutes the Illyrian provinces is the most important district for Austria. These provinces once your own, and Dalmatia, would give you all possible points of egress which you are now without. I have the feeling that I humiliate and oppress you as long as I have these provinces. You must feel the same. There is, too, an ever-increasing germ of jealousy and ill-feeling between you and France. Will you one day refuse to confer with me for the exchange of an equal portion of Galicia for these provinces? Whenever I find it necessary to make war with Russia, I should have a great and powerful ally in a King of Poland. I shall not need your provinces, and you too will find this combination not less useful to you."

I remarked to the Emperor that I could only speak on this subject with the full understanding that everything I might say should be considered as coming from the lips of a cosmopolitan, and not from the Austrian minister.

I divided the matter into two questions—the reëstablishment of a kingdom of Poland, and the exchange of a part of Galicia for the Illyrian provinces.

"The first question," I said to his Majesty, "is of a purely political nature. A kingdom of Poland is nothing more than the Duchy of Warsaw with another name and with the new boundaries for which it has striven ever since it was made. Whenever our Galician provinces are reduced in size more than they now are, our interest in the Polish question must surely diminish in the same proportion. But it seems to me impossible to approach a matter lightly which presents such many-sided political prospects, and would alter the position of the existing relations in Europe. The Illyrian provinces are most important to us from twenty points of view. Galicia has advantages on its side, for which it would be difficult to compensate. The revenue offered by Illyria is trifling, and hardly comes up to that of Galicia; it has fewer men and less means of subsistence. Galicia has important boundary points for the common-monarchy. If ever the idea of such a combination is entertained by the Emperor, my master, the exchange can only take place under quite different topographical relations, and will meet with many and great difficultics."

In a long statement, Napoleon then explained the advantages which Austria would obtain by regaining possession of the Illyrian provinces, and, on the other hand, the great danger of Galicia to Austria in case of a successful war with Russia, which should lead to the incorporation of the Polish-Russian provinces in a Duchy of Warsaw, and must give it a great importance among the Powers.

"As for the revenues," continued the Emperor, "you have one means of compensation—buy all the estates in Galicia: they supply the principal revenues of the country. It can never be a question of the Galicia of the first partition; nothing would be easier than to fix the military boundaries in the north of Hungary.

"Everything that I say to you," said the Emperor, "is entirely in confidence. I do not wish that any one should know of it but the Emperor and you. I have never spoken of it to Champagny. If the war with Russia is avoided, I

shall be quite content; but in the contrary event, it is much better to look at the consequences beforehand. I always put the question very simply as to what concerns me, both to myself and to others. So, for example, I say to myself in the present case, If it suits Austria to join with France, then she can make more use of the Illyrian provinces—irrespective of their administrative advantages—than of part of Galicia, the provinces of which are a cause of envy between the two Powers. If Austria's system inclines more to Russia, then Galicia stands quite in the first rank politically, for it serves as a connecting link. I do not desire from you any active coöperation, because I have made up my mind not again to join any coalition. I have had enough of the trial I made of it in 1809. I should have made quite another war for you, if I had been alone. I have never reckoned much on the Russians, but they have at any rate taken the place of fifty or sixty thousand Frenchmen, who would have treated you to quite another sort of war from the Russians.

"If I speak thus to you," said Napoleon in concluding his interesting and candid conversation, "it is because I will not let slip the rare opportunity when a monarch can converse with the Foreign Minister of another Power, and offer a new point of view to another Government, without expecting an answer. I do not expect the least response to this, which I have wished to impart to you before your departure. The purchase of estates in Galicia will be a sufficient proof of what the Emperor Francis thinks on the matter."

I left St.-Cloud with the consciousness that I had at last obtained light. The object of my stay in Paris was attained. I had an audience to take leave, and returned to Vienna, where I arrived before the middle of October.

I found the Emperor Francis at Grätz in Styria. On his departure from the capital, he left a request for me to follow him to Grätz without loss of time. I remained four-and-twenty hours in Vienna, to obtain from my father information about a political incident which had just taken place, and to which I shall return further on.

My report to the Emperor on the result of my observations in Paris consisted of the following remarks:—

"During the year 1811 the peace of the continent of Europe will not be destroyed by any fresh attack of Napoleon's.

"In the course of this year Napoleon will join his own forces, greatly strengthened, with those of his allies, in order to deal a great blow at Russia.

"Napoleon will begin the campaign in the spring of 1812.

"Therefore the Imperial government must employ the next year in improving the financial position in two ways: first, by lessening the quantity of paper-money; next, in making important military improvements.

"The position to be taken by Austria in the year 1812 must be that of an armed neutrality. The fate of Napoleon's undertaking, in any case a very eccentric one, will give us the direction which we shall afterwards have to take. In a war between France and Russia, Austria must take a position on the flank which will ensure a decisive importance for her opinions during the war, and at the end of it."

The Emperor shared these views, and they led us, by ways apparently indirect, to the main object always before us; and through all the varied circumstances of the following year to that policy the courageous development of which, at the right moment, was crowned by such decisive results.

Napoleon deceived himself greatly. First in his false reckoning was the conviction that the Emperor of Russia would either not fight with France, or give way at the first victory, which Napoleon had no doubt of gaining. This idea showed ignorance of the Russian monarch's character, and a disregard of the vast space at his command. By all this the Austrian cabinet was made aware of its duty, namely, to be prepared for anything that might happen.

The incident which I mentioned as having occurred before my return to Vienna was, that the Emperor Alexander had sent his Adjutant Count Schuwalow to Vienna with a proposal to confer with the Imperial cabinet about possible events. I found a plan made out for a treaty of alliance in case of a new war with France, which was given me by my father. The project was rejected, as one not applicable to the circumstances of the day, or at least not suited to the

spirit of the times. I was bent on securing the free movement of Austria with foreign nations, and on the greatest possible resuscitation of her financial and military strength. Count Schuwalow at once returned to St. Petersburg, his mission being followed by no result.

I thought it also a prudential duty to set our position as clearly as possible before the Prussian cabinet. The Prussian state was in the deepest decadence. The personal relations between King Frederick William III., Minister Hardenberg, and some other men trusted by the King, and myself, during the time that I was Ambassador at Berlin, made it possible that my opinion would be favorably received at this court. I used the opportunity to place the true position of Austria and Prussia before them, and to advise the King to patience and the remedies which time and its vicissitudes would effect, with the moral certainty that the Emperor Francis would stand by him as a firm friend. The King understood my words, and they led to a personal relation between the two monarchs which survived the storms that followed, and exercised a great influence, not only on the history of Prussia, but also of Europe.

VII—THE RUSSIAN CAMPAIGN

However bad was her condition, there seemed to be for Austria, in the domain of politics, a moment of repose; but I could not look forward to the duration of this pause beyond the year 1811. This year must be made use of by our country for unremitting attention to the most important tasks. First of these was the question of the state finances. The proper adjustment of these to the circumstances of the time would be a most laborious undertaking. The wars between 1792 and 1809 had exhausted the sources of public prosperity; the German part of the Empire was flooded with paper-money; Hungary, by law, still maintained a metallic standard, but nevertheless paid her subsidies, small as they were, in paper only, without any regard to its depreciation. It was impossible to have recourse to credit, for if foreign countries had had sufficient confidence in the resources of the Empire to stand by it in the way of credit, in spite of its precarious position, this assistance would have been cut

off from us by Napoleon, and by the ignorance which then reigned in the Continental states with respect to the system of credit.

The introduction, then, of a system of finance corresponding to this condition was not feasible, and attention must be equally paid to providing for the absolute necessities of the present, and the prospective demands of the future. To fulfill these important ends, the finance operation proposed by Count Wallis, the Minister of Finance, was very well suited. Count Wallis would have raised this to the dignity of a system made for perpetuity. But the Emperor and I thought of it only as of a bridge, leading from an untenable to a tenable condition, by the help of circumstances, the issue of which, however, was uncertain.

I must here mention one man, in whose knowledge of the situation, business dexterity, and devotion to the general good, the Emperor found a firm support, and I, assistance as enlightened as loyal, in the development of the fate of the Empire. This man was the then President of the Ministry of War, Count Bellegarde. With a thorough knowledge of military matters, familiar with my turn of mind, and quite agreeing with my political views, he was anxious not only to maintain the Imperial forces, but to strengthen them to the utmost, for every imaginable contingency, while avoiding everything that would attract attention. He alone was thoroughly acquainted with my views, and he knew how to raise himself, with me, above the illusions which assume the appearance of public opinion. He understood as well as I did the value of letting men talk.

The introduction of the new system of finance necessitated the holding of a Hungarian Diet, without the coöperation of which this would not be possible. After much opposition, the Hungarian states passed the requisite financial measures. As I shall afterwards have occasion to examine the state of Hungary more closely, I will in this place say nothing of its position at that time.

But what forced itself upon me was the imperative necessity of strengthening the central power. The Austrian monarchy is a composite whole, formed of separate districts which are historically or legally, from reasons of necessity or con-

siderations of prudence, held together by having one common head. In a state like this, the idea of unity inseparable from the existence of an Empire requires to be matured and rightly defined, if it is not to become a mere personal union with all its attendant weaknesses. The existence of a moral body convoked to defend supreme sovereign power in the common head of the Empire, without at the same time restricting the exercise of the separate rights of the provinces, seemed to be the most appropriate means by which to assert the conception of Imperial unity.

A well-organized Council of State is considered by the impartial statesman to be such a body, and so it appeared to Prince Kaunitz. According to his proposal, the Empress Maria Theresa, in the year 1760, founded a Council of State of this kind. Sound as the idea was, the practical working of it was not free from defects. It seemed to me that one of the greatest of these mistakes was the admission of the heads of its different departments (ministers there were none) into the Council of State, and the direction of this Council by a High Chancellor. Under the government of the Emperor Joseph II., the Council of State had been in many ways mismanaged, and even hindered in its action by a cabinet government in imitation of Frederick II.'s system of government.

The Council of State came forward prominently again in the reign of the Emperor Francis; but soon after the death of Prince Kaunitz it fell actually into decay, a result caused chiefly by the setting aside of oral discussion, and the substitution of voting by papers. A later reorganization was the work of some subordinate officials, who thought only of securing their own personal influence, so that the Emperor Francis was induced to dissolve it entirely in the year 1809. I devoted my whole attention to the creation of a new Council of State, in place of the old one. My intentions, and the proposals relative to them, aimed at associating with the Emperor a true Council of State, and, instead of councilors working singly, to form one common deliberative body; to give to the central power a more central spirit, so as to procure for the monarch, by a higher degree of tranquillity and security, greater facility for carrying on his own work. To

the further course of this plan of organization, which was to be carried on hand-in-hand with a revision of the institutions of the provincial states, I will return again.

During this interval of peace I was made Curator of the Academy of Fine Arts in Vienna, an unexpected and honorable appointment, which opened up to me an unfamiliar but most congenial sphere of activity, in which there was full scope for my strong consciousness of duty, heightened as it was in this case by my inclination. I began my functions as Curator of the Academy, and was anxious to infuse into the old statutes of the institution (with the coöperation of Sonnenfels) fresh strength and inner life, by reforms suited to the times; and I endeavored to invest it with outward brilliancy by the reception of foreign notabilities as honorary members.

In political matters the year 1811 passed as I had foreseen. Napoleon advanced his forces as far as the Duchy of Warsaw, and made Dantzig a *point d'appui* for the supplies necessary for a great campaign. "I have," he said to me, in the year 1812, "in Dantzig secured for myself a second Paris." Russia was also on her side preparing, and strove to end the war, in which she was involved with the Porte, as quickly as possible, whilst Napoleon was always endeavoring to add fresh fuel to its flames. In outward appearance Austria seemed to be in the enjoyment of profound peace, and was supposed to be exclusively occupied in healing the wounds which the last war had inflicted on the Empire. Prussia pined under the most unhappy depression, and endeavored to stir up German feeling by means of the *Tugendbund;* in South Germany, however, this had no success. The armies of the States belonging to the Rhenish Confederation prepared themselves to join the French *Grande Armée,* in the ranks of which there were already Spanish, Portuguese, and Italian contingents. The Continental prohibitions against trade steadily increased, and the granting of licenses became a source of wealth to the French finances. Napoleon's power pressed heavily upon the whole Continent. It took the direction of a system of incorporation carried out by Imperial decrees. It was the eve of the catastrophe, which to a quiet spectator had not, indeed, the feeling of a calm before the

storm, but the sad aspect of a general humiliation of princes and people under the verdict of an inexorable fate.

The situation developed itself with the approach of the year 1812. The moment for Austria's declaration with regard to the forthcoming war between France and Russia had arrived. We declared for an armed neutrality. Napoleon demanded the contribution of an auxiliary army of thirty thousand men. The Emperor Francis granted this request, under the condition that the neutrality and inviolability of the Austrian territory should not be endangered by either of the belligerent Powers. All history has not recorded so strange a political situation, and it probably never will record a second example of the same kind. It was the result of circumstances, and a remarkable illustration of a period fantastic in every respect, and afflicted with every kind of abnormal condition. In the imposition of an auxiliary army from Austria Napoleon sought, not a material strengthening of his forces, for this did not seem to him to be necessary, but a moral guarantee for the restraint of the other part of the Austrian army within the boundaries of their own kingdom. The Emperor Alexander considered the closing of the Austrian territory as a useful defense for the southern provinces of the Russian Empire. Both sides acknowledged the neutrality of Austria, notwithstanding her contribution of an auxiliary army.

I was satisfied, for what I wished above all was to secure for Austria freedom in her political action when the moment came for decision with regard to the coming war.

When Napoleon, in the spring of 1812, went to Dresden, to make from thence the last arrangements for the campaign against Russia, he expressed a wish to meet there the Emperor Francis. The Emperor complied with his wish, and set out for Dresden accompanied by the Empress and myself. The Empress Louisa was, it is well known, very bitter in her feeling against Napoleon. The manner of both Emperors was suited to their position, but cold. The daily contact into which I now came with Napoleon was a continuation of our intercourse at the time of my embassy to Paris, and my residence there in 1810. Our conversations sometimes lasted for hours, but we did not often touch upon politics. It was at this

time that he explained to me his ideas on the best form of government for France. "France," he said to me, "lends itself less to representative forms than many other countries. In France talent is common enough; but it is only talent, there is nothing beneath it which resembles character, and still less principle. Every one runs after applause—whether it comes from above or below, no matter: they want to be noticed and applauded. In the tribune they did nothing but make revolution, so I put them in order—I dissolved them. I put a gag on the *Corps Législatif.* Silence an assembly which, if it is anything, must be deliberative, and you discredit it. Therefore I had only to take the key from the door of the hall of assembly and put it in my pocket; that shall be done with the *Corps Législatif.* Nobody will think any more about it, for its existence is already forgotten. I do not, however, desire absolute power: I wish for more than mere forms. I wish for one thing entirely for the public, order and utility. I would give a new organization to the Senate and to the *Conseil d'Etat.* The first will replace the upper chamber, the second that of the Deputies. I shall continue to appoint senators to all the places. I shall have one-third of the *Conseil d'Etat* elected by triple lists, the rest I shall nominate. In this assembly the budget will be made, and the laws elaborated. In this way I shall have a real representation, for it will be entirely composed of men well accustomed to business. No mere tattlers, no *idéologues,* no false tinsel. Then France will be a well governed country, even under a *fainéant* prince, and such princes there will be. The manner in which they are brought up is sufficient to make that certain."

I took the liberty of asking why he had not carried out his project. The Senate had without this already lost its credit, and the legislative bodies were reduced to a sphere of action which pleased no one; to which Napoleon answered:—

"Everything has its season; that for reform has not yet come. I must wait for two or three years, and who knows when the war will end which I am just beginning? That will come after the peace."

On the whole, I received from our confidential intercourse in Dresden the impression that if Napoleon, on the one hand,

did not deceive himself about the greatness of the undertaking, and looked on his success as the keystone of an edifice which hovered before his mind as a Carlovingian Empire under a Bonapartist dynasty; on the other hand, his undertaking depended on the terrible chances of war, about which he indulged in the most dangerous delusion.

As illustrating the reasons for my views, I will mention the following. Napoleon was convinced that the Russian army would open the campaign by crossing the boundaries of their own country. The conviction expressed by me that the Emperor Alexander would await the attack of the French army and baffle it by a retreat, Napoleon opposed both on strategical grounds, and from Alexander's manner of thought and action, with which he imagined himself to be perfectly acquainted. All which reasons told more in favor of my views than his.

When the reports from the army, drawn up in the Duchy of Warsaw ready for action, deprived him of all hope that the Emperor Alexander would take the initiative, he explained to me his plan for the war with Russia in the following words, which subsequent events have made memorable:—

"My enterprise is one of those of which the solution is to be found in patience. Victory will attend the most patient. I shall open the campaign by crossing the Niemen. It will be concluded at Smolensk and Minsk. There I shall stop. I shall fortify these two points, and occupy myself at Wilna, where the chief head-quarters will be during the next winter, with the organization of Lithuania, which burns with impatience to be delivered from the yoke of Russia. I shall wait and see which of us tires first: I, of feeding my army at the expense of Russia; or Alexander, of sustaining my army at the expense of his country. Perhaps I myself may pass the most inclement months of the winter at Paris."

To my question what he would do in case the Emperor Alexander did not vouchsafe to make peace because of the occupation of Lithuania, Napoleon answered:

"In that case I should in the following year advance quite to the center of the Empire, and I shall be patient in 1813 as I shall have been in 1812! The affair, as I have told you, is a question of time."

That Napoleon's plan for the campaign of 1812 was exactly the one which he mentioned to me has become an historical fact; the same may be said of the motives which induced him to undertake the expedition to Moscow.

The following conversation between us may serve to throw yet more light on Napoleon's ideas:

"I begin to be a little perplexed," he said to me on another occasion, "about the perfection of your military system, which you have heard me describe as worthy to serve as a model, and which, to my great regret, I cannot myself adopt, because the military organization of the two empires is not alike. You have composed the auxiliary corps under the command of Prince Schwarzenberg of the *cadres* of twenty regiments. Have you then forgotten in Austria that there is nothing in an army more valuable than these *cadres;* why did you not make up the corps of five or six regiments, which would have sufficed for the number required?"

"I am surprised," I answered, "that your Majesty addresses such a question to me. The Imperial army, which a secret article of the Treaty of Vienna fixes at a maximum of 150,000 men, is now composed principally of *cadres;* for the Emperor, well aware of their value, has not, since the peace, diminished the number of regiments. He now puts at your disposal a part of what you have left him."

"That does not prevent this from being a mistake," interrupted Napoleon.

If Napoleon was right in his remark, yet we, for our part, were not wrong. Field-Marshal Count Bellegarde had composed the corps of Prince Schwarzenberg of more *cadres* than was necessary. By the filling up of these *cadres* with soldiers, together with the army of observation stationed in Bohemia and Galicia to defend the neutrality, the whole forces of the Empire were ready for action, a measure which the Imperial Government could not have taken in any other way without exciting attention both at home and abroad.

The most confidential relations existed between the courts of Vienna and Berlin during the whole of Napoleon's campaign. Whether the course we pursued was better than the one which Freiherr von Stein and his political friends were never tired of urging upon King William III., I must leave

to be decided by the actual events of the years 1813-1814. The results would certainly have been quite different if Austria had not taken so prudent an attitude in the last adventurous undertaking of the conqueror of the world. If we had listened to the urgent entreaties of the Prussian party, we should, without any means of defense, have seen Napoleon on the battle-fields of our own exhausted territories, instead of on the icy steppes of Russia. At any rate, Austria's course has not run counter to the ways of fate.

The campaign of 1812 was followed by consequences which even before it began I knew to be not only possible but most probable, on account of Napoleon's erroneous views. But I am free to confess that neither I nor any one else imagined that Napoleon would attempt in the first campaign the task so difficult in itself, and which he had mentioned to me as to be put off till 1813, in case of the longer duration of the war. If Napoleon's whole enterprise was fantastic—the *va banque* of a gambler maddened by former gains—the marching on Moscow by the French army, which was prevented from fighting by the continual retreating of the enemy to the heights of Smolensk, was a mistake. The only explanation of this is to be found in Napoleon's firm conviction that the Russian monarch would not and could not expose the second, indeed the most beautiful, city of his Empire to the occupation of the enemy.

The continuance of Austria's neutral attitude after the result of the war with Russia, could have no other meaning but a confession of a want of strength in the Empire. I need not say that this want of strength was very evident to the Emperor and myself. The question which arose between his Majesty and myself was not on this ground, but referred to the direction we should take in changing our passive attitude into an active one. The King of Prussia, who had not been neutral in the Franco-Russian war, but had taken an active part by sending a small force to join the ranks of the French army, entered into an alliance with Russia after the dissolution of the French army. Our position was quite different from that of the Prussian court. Stein and the Prussian Particularists or abstract Germanists, together with the Russian cabinet, urged on Austria the immediate declaration

of war against France. We did not allow ourselves to be disturbed in our quiet course, and referred the two newly-allied Powers to the decision which would be made known by the Emperor at the right moment. The bases which we wished to give to the political position of our Empire, called upon by the vicissitude of things to decide the fate of the world, are expressed in the following short statement, laid before me by the Emperor Francis, which requires neither amplification nor explanation:—

"The political position of the Imperial court is that of an armed neutrality. This position, if persevered in, would degrade the Austrian Power into a mere negation. This could be changed only by a rapid transition, or by a course of moderation which secures to the Emperor free action in the future. Rapid transition would make Austria a member of the Northern alliance, or lead to a union with France: while the latter would be impossible, the former is open to us. The transition from neutrality to war lies in an armed mediation."

The Emperor was in favor of the mediation. The most important considerations supported the moral and political advantages of this attitude.

In relating my conversations with Napoleon in the month of May 1812, I have already mentioned the circumstance that Prince Schwarzenberg's army of thirty thousand men consisted mostly of the *cadres* of the regiments. This corps formed the extreme right wing of the great French army. Napoleon had not required it to take part in the operations of the principal army during the short campaign in the interior of Russia, for reasons which have been already mentioned. Prince Schwarzenberg, whose army corps had been reinforced by the Saxon contingent, had not during the course of the campaign received any orders from Napoleon. He, therefore, had sustained no losses worth mentioning. After the retreat of the French army, Prince Schwarzenberg led his corps to the north-west frontier of Galicia, where it was opposed to the corps of Prince Joseph Poniatowski, whose retreat had taken place in the same direction. Only a small portion of the Imperial army had been stationed, at the beginning of the Franco-Russian war, to guard the neutral

territory of the Empire in Bohemia. The greater part of the whole army was either in Galicia or near by, as an auxiliary corps or corps of observation. Galicia could not be denuded of troops so long as the Polish army in the southern part of the Grand-Duchy of Warsaw was under arms. Therefore a rapid concentration of forces on the western frontier of the Empire was impossible, for in any case the formation of an army corresponding to the strength of the Empire, and adapted for a great war, would require time. We were convinced that Napoleon would use the winter to begin a new campaign in the year 1813. We could not prevent him from doing this; therefore it was our duty to prepare to strike a decisive blow. We kept these circumstances in view, and the Cabinet avoided giving any diplomatic explanations as to its course of action in the immediate future. That the part which Austria must take in this future must be a most energetic one arose from the general situation of affairs and the geographical position of our country. When and how this was to be done was the problem we had to solve. Nobody could doubt that the Emperor Francis would strictly follow the voice of his conscience. The moment was too important for us to feel impelled to any definite expression. We kept back even our decision as to the mediation, till we were satisfied that the right moment had arrived. After the end of the campaign in Russia, our forces could be reinforced and collected, and take up strategical positions in a few months. These positions were to be taken up in Bohemia. In our rear we were hampered by the Polish force under Poniatowski. The Imperial forces on the southern frontier also received the necessary reinforcements.

In this position of affairs, my task was limited to giving the Emperor a report on the situation in which we should find ourselves in consequence of an armed mediation. Accustomed, in all situations, to put clearly before me the aims in view—and to allow the necessary time for their development—I arrived at the results expressed in the following short sentences:—

"The miscarrying of Napoleon's enterprise against Russia has altered Austria's position as well as that of the other Powers."

"The final solution of the fate of Europe will exhibit itself by the Peace."

"To bring this about is the true part and business of Austria."

"In what way can Peace be established—a real Peace, not a mere truce in disguise, like all former treaties of Peace with the French Republic and with Napoleon?"

"Undoubtedly this can only be done by restricting the power of France within such limits as give hopes of a lasting peace and establish a balance of power among the chief States."

Napoleon's power, always striving to extend itself, was broken by the miscarriage of his last undertaking. Was it destroyed? No. The campaigns of 1813 and 1814, indeed, even the short campaign of 1815, proved the contrary. We did not doubt that Napoleon would not consider his power destroyed by the failure of the last campaign, and here our supposition differed from that of his open adversaries. They desired the immediate pursuit of the enemy. Of the practical considerations of whither and wherewith they did not think, and indeed considered it as loss of time to do so. My calmer judgment looked forward to a reasonable and successful termination, in comparison with which I thought nothing of a few lost months.

The attitude of Austria as a mediatory armed power, said I to myself, harmonizes with the geographical position of the empire, as well as with its forces, and will secure to the Emperor Francis the last word either in peace or war. Preparations to the greatest extent possible must be made for the carrying on of the war. By thus gaining time the part to be played by the Emperor will become more safe.

Two questions of the utmost importance were immediately presented to my mind. The one concerned the boundaries of Austria and Prussia. In the first place, this boundary must be fixed, as well in the view of the opening of a new campaign between France and the two allied Powers already at war with her as in the view of the contingency of peace without resuming the contest. If the precaution of a previous arrangement of the territories of the allied Powers were not taken, the war would become one of conquest, and, in case

of a speedy peace, that peace would be wanting in its very first principles. We took our position with respect to both kingdoms, not on the basis of extension of territories, but on the restoration of their *status quo* in the year 1803 or 1805. The Emperor decided to leave the choice between these two years to the King of Prussia.

The other no less important question was that of the *quid faciendum* with all those territories which had formed the old German Empire, and which, after its dissolution, were divided into four parts, of which three belonged to Austria, Prussia, and the states forming the Confederation of the Rhine, but the fourth consisted of the great German provinces which were incorporated as departments in France. A German central political body no longer existed. First of all, we had to consider: Should and could such a body be called into life?

It happened with this question as it is, has been, and will be with all important questions at all times. One may consider them from a calm and practical or from a passionate and hasty point of view. The Imperial cabinet took the first course. The German Empire of a thousand years was dissolved in 1805 and 1806, and indeed, strictly speaking, as much from the want of inward vitality as from external influences. If earlier defects had crippled the strength of the Empire, its continuance had become a sheer impossibility by the results of the Regensburg mediation in the year 1803. Not only had the German Empire been extinguished in 1805, but the German name had disappeared from the map.

The question whether a German central political body should be called into life could only be answered in the affirmative, for all imaginable moral and political reasons combined to support this decision. The problem remaining for the Imperial cabinet was therefore only how this was to be accomplished. To understand the disposition of the Imperial cabinet on this important point it is necessary to set clearly before us the state of things at that time,—a state which had, under the impressions of later years and the party strifes which issued from them, been essentially transformed, but which at the time when we write this (1852) again confirms the correctness of our decision at that time.

In deciding the point, "How can a German state be again admitted into the European corporation of states?" we considered these questions:—

1. Can the old Holy Roman Empire of the German nation be called into life again?

This question we could only answer with a decided negative; for Germany (the name itself had only a geographical value) had lost the elements necessary to re-establish the old forms.

2. Could the fragments of the earlier Empire be gathered together into one united state?

We answered this question in the negative, on account of the following considerations:—

The idea of a state must rest on the basis of a united sovereignty, whether that of a personal sovereign or of the sovereignty of the people. The personal sovereign may reign over several countries different in their provincial laws and in their local internal administration. One sovereign people cannot rule over another. At that time we never thought of the latter; it was left to time to introduce it into German territory. The question then was, and could only be, of absolute sovereignty resting on an Emperor, and against this there arose insuperable difficulties.

The Confederation of the Rhine had assigned to the princes of the confederate states the sovereign rights which in the Holy Roman Empire belonged to the Emperor and the Empire. These states should have been forced to restore them to the head of the state; and the moral consequences of this constraint would have been but an addition to the fundamental evils of the former state of the empire, namely, to the unavoidable collisions between the sovereign head and the supremacy of the separate states.

Would the King of Prussia have admitted the subordination of his sovereignty to that of the German Emperor? and would the Emperor of Austria, on his part, have accommodated himself to such a pretension?

Of the reëstablishment of a German Empire and a united kingdom we gave up all idea, and considered only the formation of a German Confederation.

I thought that for the present the part of armed media-

tion did not require more than the establishment of these bases. There seemed to me to be a nearer prospect of war than of peace. I was convinced that the Powers had not, as they imagined in Berlin, an easy contest before them; but that Napoleon's efforts would be most vigorous—of this I was convinced, and therefore I exerted myself to develop the strength of our forces to the utmost. In this course lay salvation in the case of a war in which Austria would be called to strike the decisive blow. The means of attaining peace could only be discovered in the course of circumstances, and this required time, which to anticipate, I have always considered a fault.

A political interlude now took place. The King of Saxony, driven from his states by the united Russian and Prussian armies, put himself under the protection of Austria. He declared himself ready to join the Imperial court in its political action. We accepted his adhesion, and advised the king to await the course of events quietly at Prague.

Napoleon devoted the winter of 1812-1813 to preparations for the campaign. This was done in Prussia, whilst new forces were sent to the Russian army from the interior of the kingdom. Austria, on her part, collected her apparently exhausted forces, and led them to their places of assembly in Bohemia, and to the southern and western frontiers which had been moved forward within the old territory.

The result corresponded with the skillful preparations, which Count Bellegarde had made to ensure its attainment. In the states of the Confederation of the Rhine new soldiers were levied to fill up the numerous gaps which the campaign in Russia had made in their contingents. The whole of Europe was in arms, and waited in anxious expectation for the approaching events.

Firm in his convictions and quiet in his conscience, the Emperor Francis stood in the midst of a commotion the result of which it was impossible to foresee. What made the Emperor so secure was the strength of his principles, and the consciousness that he rested on a faithful people and a courageous army; how strong these were the result has proved!

I should leave a gap in my picture if I did not say a word here on the feeling of the people in the different countries, and in different circles of society. With respect to the feeling of the people, very different ideas prevailed, according to the personal feeling and party spirit of the observer. I may describe the moral features of society, as it appeared to me, as follows:

There was a universal feeling of weariness and of the necessity of such a conclusion to the war, as would bring repose. The war had in its course of one-and-twenty years, covered with corpses many battle-fields, wasted whole kingdoms, overturned thrones, bowed beneath its yoke the republic of a hundred years, and as its final consequence seemed to have placed the fate of Europe in the hands of one man. This feeling, and the misery inseparable from it were universal, and were shared even by those whose opinions were generally in opposition. Conqueror and conquered were both weary and anxious for repose, in which to enjoy their conquests or to secure what remained to them; but the Prussian States formed a third and very different element in the general situation. The destinies of Prussia differed from those of other states. If its dynasty had been destroyed by Napoleon, and replaced by another, it would so far have shared the fate of the French and Spanish Bourbons, the royal houses of Hanover, Hesse Cassel, Orange, and others. If, again, Napoleon had erased the name of Prussia from the map, the Prussian state would have shared the same fate as the German Empire, Holland, Piedmont, the States of the Church, and Tuscany. But Napoleon had ruled it otherwise with Prussia. The tyranny he exercised on it was unendurable, and he kept it in a state bordering on an impossible existence and final extinction.

France was just as tired of never-ending wars as the countries which, since the unsuccessful campaign of 1792, had had to bear the hardships of the actual battle-fields, the devastation of their provinces, and the payment of the contributions. Napoleon had, however, given back to France itself the internal peace which she had lost, and the country was grateful for this benefit, whilst French patriotism rejoiced in the brilliant successes of his armies.

The results of the war had produced very different effects on the German Governments and the various German races. Mixed together and intermingled by the "Mediatization" of the year 1803, the feelings of the people of the various German races took quite different directions. The people of those German States whose territory had been enlarged by the Peace of Pressburg (1805) and the Peace of Vienna (1809) were contented with these and the protection of the conqueror of the world. North Germany, on the contrary, could not see any reason for satisfaction either in the union of the sea coasts with the French Empire, or in the establishment of German States under members of the Bonaparte family in the place of their own princes.

The decided feeling of the different populations of the Austrian imperial states was for the preservation of peace. Austria had borne the burden of all the former wars except that of 1806, which had ended so unfortunately for Prussia; the inner strength of the Empire seemed to be exhausted, and the people to have lost all hope of regaining by force of arms what they had lost. In Austria, deserted since the peace of Basle (1795) and the later wars (1805 and 1809) by its German allies of the Confederation, the expression *German feeling* had no more meaning than a myth, especially in the high sense attached to it, since the catastrophe of Prussia and the northern German territories, by the upper strata of the populations of those countries.

A class not numerous but important from the position of the individuals composing it raised the banner of war in our country. This party only shared the feeling of hatred to the person of Napoleon with the people of the north of Germany, who called for freedom from the yoke of the conqueror of the world. They took the name of "Napoleon-haters"; their voices died away in space, and their efforts would never have had, even if the party had been stronger, any effect on the mind of the Emperor Francis, or on the voice of my political conscience. The monarch would not suffer a repetition of those trials which the Empire had gone through after the campaigns of 1805 and 1809; and had he been willing, I should not have been ready to join him.

We pursued the plan known only to ourselves in seeming

quiet and under the protection of secrecy. The extension of the armaments, and the grave preparations of every kind, were justified by the certainty, which increased every day, that Napoleon would commence a new campaign in Germany in 1813, and the whole people felt them to be measures necessary for the peace of Austria.

So passed the winter of 1812 to 1813. The belligerent powers, France and her allies on one side, Russia, Prussia, and Great Britain on the other, drew up their armies, in the beginning of spring, in strategic positions. From political as well as military considerations, we took up our position in Bohemia. The army collected there was placed under the command of Prince Schwarzenberg. The Emperor left it to me to fix the moment which I thought most suitable to announce to the belligerent Powers that Austria had given up her neutrality, and to invite them to recognize her armed mediation as the most fitting attitude.

Napoleon's victories at Lützen and Bautzen were the signs which told me that the hour had come.

VIII—THE DAWN OF PEACE

I SHOULD exceed the limits I have proposed to myself in the present work, if I were to enter into the details of the negotiations which preceded the Peace of May 30, 1814.

The Peace itself bore the stamp of the moderation of the monarchs and their cabinets—a moderation which did not arise from weakness, but from the resolve to secure a lasting peace to Europe. The situation was one of those when, for the attainment of an object, it is more dangerous to do too much than too little.

Only a calculation resting on firm foundations can secure the success of an undertaking. It had been proved that the peace to be concluded with France could only be looked at either as a revenge on the country, or as establishing the greatest possible political equilibrium between the Powers. That the Emperor Francis prepared, in perfect harmony with my conviction, to bring about the solution of the problem in the latter direction, had been proved by the conditions under which Austria entered the Alliance. The rejection of the system of conquest, and the establishment of the system of

restitution and equivalents in the forming of kingdoms and states, remove all doubt on this point.

I was beforehand well aware that the Imperial cabinet would, from this manner of looking at the whole question, come into conflict with all kinds of political swindlers and with the separate interests of single governments, but I did not allow my course to be altered thereby. Just as the entrance of Austria into the Quadruple Alliance had formed the foundation for the Peace of Paris, that peace formed the foundation for the settlement of the difficult problem by the Vienna Congress.

After the signature of the Paris Peace, I went with the Emperor Alexander and the King of Prussia to England, taking with me the excuses of the Emperor Francis to the Prince Regent. I also received myself a personal invitation from the Prince Regent. Twenty years had elapsed since I had first visited that country, and made the acquaintance of the then Prince of Wales. I wished to see England again, to behold with my own eyes the impression which the changes in the political situation on the Continent must have made there, and at the same time to confer with the English Cabinet on the negotiations preliminary to the Congress of Vienna.

After an absence of several months, I arrived again in Vienna on July 18. The moral impression made on me by the mood in which I found the country was not elevating, but so far satisfactory that it convinced me that the political line which I followed was right, in reference to the position of our own empire as well as to the securing of a long general peace. Austria was enduring the after-pains of a two-and-twenty years' war, and felt her very existence in danger. The people of Austria, always calm and reasonable, had imagined that the union of the Emperor's daughter with Napoleon would have been a pledge of peace, and they yielded reluctantly to the fate of a new war. The result to be expected from this war seemed to the populace to be nothing more than a second edition of the former peace in rather a different form.

What a striking contrast was there in the situation of Prussia as compared with that of Austria! Only a dreamer could put them on the same level, and to the dreamers I

have never belonged. The domain which opened the widest field for men of this class at the beginning of the Congress was Germany, and with this conviction I looked continually in that direction during the weeks preceding the opening of the Congress.

I have already mentioned the saying of the Emperor that a German political body must be called into existence in the form of a Confederation, and have asserted that this had practically the value of a *conditio sine quâ non* as to the first entrance of Austria into the Alliance. The direction I had to follow was therefore clearly pointed out. The only question was, the choice of means for the attainment of the end. This matter was made extremely difficult by the Powers which opposed it. In the first rank stood the separatist efforts of Prussia; then the dread of the German princes of any limitation of their sovereign rights; and, lastly, the aspirations which had emerged in North Germany and the Rhine Provinces since 1806—aspirations which showed themselves partly in decided democratic tendencies, and partly can only be described as "*deutschthümelnde Gelüste*" (predilections for German nationality and principles). In the conflict which arose, the aristocratic tendencies blended with the democratic in the mind of Freiherr von Stein played a peculiar and prominent part. Among all these parties the latter, however, was the most divided, both with regard to end and means. To the dictates of party I paid no other attention than to be conscious of their existence, and to redouble our efforts to keep our own path clear.

I summoned a few officials of the time of the Empire to a consultation upon German questions, but I was soon convinced that I could find in them the aid only of mere antiquarianism. I determined, therefore, to take my stand immovably upon the general principles of the Confederation, and to relegate the special provisions to German deputies at the Congress.

This Congress was opened on November 3, 1814, by a simple unpretending conference not at all corresponding to the expectations of a public greedy for "spectacle."[7]

[7] The public had taken it into its head that the meetings of the Plenipotentiaries at the Congress would be held in the great Ballroom of the Imperial Palace, and that the public would be admitted to the galleries which run round it.

The Plenipotentiaries of the different states and countries begged me to undertake the direction of the negotiations. I undertook that office in the conviction that the questions to be submitted to the Congress could only be settled if brought forward in systematic order, everything unnecessary being rigorously rejected, with a clear apprehension of everything that time and circumstances demanded. I submitted a scheme for the order of proceeding, which embraced—

(*a*) The consultations of the members of the Quadruple Alliance and of France, under the designation of the "*Comité des cinq Puissances.*"

(*b*) The meetings of the Plenipotentiaries of these five Powers with the Plenipotentiaries of Spain, Portugal, and Sweden, under the designation of the "*Assemblée des huit Cours,*" and their connection with the representatives of the other states.

(*c*) The institution of a commission to be formed from the Plenipotentiaries of the German states, specially devoted to the regulation of German affairs.

This form was accepted; and under its protection the grave matters submitted to the assembly were brought to a solution.

The history of the Congress is written in its Acts and in its results, and has no place in these pages. It has experienced the destiny of all remarkable events, it has not escaped the criticism of the prejudiced, or the censure of the superficial; and, in order to estimate the importance of its transactions, the consideration may suffice that from this Congress the foundations of the political peace which has subsisted for eight-and-thirty years have proceeded, and that its most important decrees have been able not only to defy the storms which arose in the intermediate period, but even to survive the revolutions of the year 1848.[8]

The news received on March 7, 1815, that Napoleon had left the island of Elba contributed much to the acceleration

[8] The *mot* of Field-Marshal the Prince de Ligne, "*le Congrès danse mais ne marche pas,*" has gone the round of the newspapers. During the Congress a number of crowned heads with numerous retinues and a crowd of tourists assembled within the walls of Vienna. To provide social recreation for them was one of the duties of the Imperial Court; that these festivities had no connection with the labors of the Congress, and did not interfere with them, is proved by the short duration of the Congress, which accomplished its work in five months.

of the negotiations just begun in the Congress, and especially to a more speedy agreement of the German courts with regard to the Acts of Confederation. The course of the affair was as follows, and the decision for war was taken in almost as short a time as I shall require for describing it.

I received the first news of Napoleon having left Elba in the following manner. A conference between the Plenipotentiaries of the five Powers took place in my house on the night of March 6, and lasted till three o'clock in the morning. Since the Cabinets had met in Vienna, I had given my servant orders that if a courier arrived at night he was not to awake me. In spite of this order, the servant brought me at six o'clock in the morning a dispatch, sent by courier, and marked *urgent*. When I saw on the envelope the words "from the Consul-general at Genoa," having been only two hours in bed, I laid the dispatch unopened on the nearest table, and turned round again to sleep. Once disturbed, however, sleep would not come again. About half-past seven I resolved to open the dispatch. If contained the information in six lines: "The English Commissary, Campbell, has just appeared in the harbor, to inquire whether Napoleon has been seen in Genoa, as he has disappeared from the island of Elba; this question being answered in the negative, the English ship has again put out to sea."

I was dressed in a few minutes, and before eight o'clock I was with the Emperor. He read the dispatch, and said to me quietly and calmly, as he always did on great occasions: "Napoleon seems to wish to play the adventurer: that is his concern; ours is to secure to the world that peace which he has disturbed for years. Go without delay to the Emperor of Russia and the King of Prussia, and tell them that I am ready to order my army to march back to France. I do not doubt but that both monarchs will agree with me."

At a quarter-past eight I was with the Emperor Alexander, who dismissed me with the same words as the Emperor Francis had used. At half-past eight I received a similar declaration from the mouth of King Frederick William III. At nine o'clock I was at my house again, where I had directed Field-Marshal Prince Schwarzenberg to meet me. At ten o'clock the ministers of the four Powers came at my request. At

the same hour adjutants were already on their way, in all directions, to order the armies to halt who were returning home.

Thus war was decided on in less than an hour. When the ministers assembled at my house, the event was unknown to them. Talleyrand was the first to enter. I gave him the dispatch from Genoa to read. He remained calm, and the following laconic conversation took place between us:

Talleyrand.—"Do you know where Napoleon is going?"

Metternich.—"The dispatch does not say anything about it."

Talleyrand.—"He will embark somewhere on the coast of Italy, and throw himself into Switzerland."

Metternich.—"He will go straight to Paris."

This is the history in its full simplicity.

One great stumbling-block in the arrangement of the German territorial questions at the Vienna Congress proved to be the agreement made at Kalisch between the Emperor of Russia and the King of Prussia with regard to the incorporation of the kingdom of Saxony with the Prussian monarchy. When at last the Powers had come to an agreement between themselves about this important question, the consent of the King of Saxony not having been yet received, the news arrived in Vienna of Napoleon's escape. The Congress commissioned the Duke of Wellington, Prince Talleyrand, and myself to gain the consent of King Frederick Augustus, who was at that time in Pressburg. We repaired to the much-harassed Prince, and concluded the business in a few hours.

As a circumstance very characteristic of the time, I will mention that the Duke of Wellington, on the day of our return to Vienna, was present at a review at Pressburg of a regiment of cuirassiers, which was going to the Rhine, whose march through Vienna on their way to Hungary the Duke had also seen.

In looking back, quite impartially, on the results of the Congress now concluded, I may be allowed to say a few words.

The peculiar characteristic of the French Revolution, from its very beginning, was that it was thoroughly social. Its political character, of which Napoleon was the highest expression, was at first foreign to it. Napoleon in endeavoring

to restore France to internal order, knew no bounds to his love of power.

The unexpected opposition he met with in his enterprise against Russia, on which he had not calculated, but which the force of circumstances opposed to his erroneous plans, had caused an agreement among the Powers which did not exist in the earlier wars with the Republic and the French Empire, and which Napoleon had thought unattainable.

That the fatal result to Napoleon of the campaign in Russia did not deceive the Emperor Francis as to the difficulty of attaining for the Continent a secure political peace, events have shown. That the political rebuilding required after Napoleon's fall would be a most difficult task was evident to the Emperor and myself. In our views and feelings, the rejection of all undertakings founded merely on sentiment predominated so strongly as to give to the work whose forerunners were the victories of the Alliance, and whose result was the Peace of Paris, the same impress of quiet deliberation, which had marked our course in the preliminary period.

There was no doubt that if the Congress confined itself to the limits of calm calculation, it would be exposed to great opposition. The longest time of political peace which Europe has ever enjoyed would, however, suffice to tranquillize the conscience of the great monarch and his assistant, even if the work of the Congress itself had not remained triumphantly fireproof in the years 1848 and 1849!

The history of the Hundred Days was but an episode, in illustration of which I will relate only the following incident:—

When Napoleon, after his return to Paris, restored to Fouché his former position as Minister of Police, the latter followed exactly in the footsteps of his old course of action, which was a strange mixture of abject subjection to the views of the Emperor and of rebellion against them. Fouché, who undeniably had great insight into the position of Napoleon and of France, as well as that of the great Powers, and who saw no prospect of final victory in the return of Napoleon to the French Imperial throne, sent to me at Vienna a secret agent, with a proposal, addressed to the Emperor Francis, to proclaim the King of Rome Emperor, and accompanied

also with a request addressed to myself to dispatch a commissioner to Basle, to come to an arrangement for the carrying out of the project. How abhorrent such a step as this would be to the Emperor Francis, on this the French Minister of Police alone could entertain any delusion. The Emperor commanded me at once to communicate the proposal to the Emperor Alexander and King Frederick William, and to leave it to their judgment, not whether the idea should be entertained, but whether a confidential agent should be dispatched to obtain information with respect to the proposal. Both monarchs advised this step. I commissioned an official of my department to undertake this business, informed him of the secret password, and bade him hear everything and say nothing. The agents met at an appointed hour, and after a short time separated because neither had anything to communicate to the other. It afterwards came out that Napoleon had been informed of the step of his Minister of Police, and instead of a representative of Fouché's, had sent to Basle an agent of his own. This history has found its way into the memoirs of the time, and originated a report of an understanding between Napoleon and the Emperor Francis. Thus is history written!

The battle of Waterloo gave the finishing stroke to the destiny of Napoleon. Even if this battle had not resulted in the success due to the iron resolution of the English General and the courageous assistance of Field-Marshal Blücher, the cause of Napoleon would nevertheless have been irretrievably lost. The Austrian and Russian armies together, with the contingent of the German Confederation, moving towards the Rhine, would have spread over France. The power which she before possessed under the Empire was completely broken in consequence of the destructive concessions which Napoleon in the course of the Hundred Days was constrained to make. Bonapartism lived only in the army and with some adherents among the civilians. The country sighed for peace in 1815 as it had sighed for it in preceding years. If the character of Louis XVIII. had been different, the house of Bourbon would have lasted longer than it did. My feeling in this respect was not the product of a later time: I held it after the first return of Louis XVIII. and briefly expressed it to

the King himself in these words: *Votre Majesté croit fonder la Monarchie: Elle se trompe, c'est la Révolution qu'Elle prend en sous-œuvre!*

I took the liberty of reminding the King of this remark, after his second return. Louis XVIII. was gifted with much power of mind, which, however, took rather a theoretical than a practical direction. He ascended the throne in 1814, still under the influence of those views which had caused him to play the part of president of a section of the *Assemblée des Notables.* To these he had added some ideas, gathered, during his emigration, from the *école anglaise,* of the same kind as those which since Montesquieu's time had perplexed so many minds in France.

The second Peace of Paris was the complement of the first, and different from it only in this, that the Powers desired to give to the country a lesson, by taking away some places on the frontier, by restoring to foreign countries the art-treasures seized in the wars of the Revolution, by imposing a contribution, and by the temporary occupation by some of the departments, in order to secure internal peace and the safety of the ancient throne of France.

During the negotiations of the second Peace of Paris, the Emperor Alexander desired me to come to him, that he might impart to me that he was occupied with a great undertaking, about which he wished especially to consult the Emperor Francis. "There are things," said the Emperor, "which feelings must decide, and feelings are under the influence of personal position and situation. These have a commanding influence on individuals. If it was a matter of business, I should ask you for your advice, but the present matter is of such a kind that not the ministers but only the monarchs are capable of deciding it. Tell the Emperor Francis that I wish to speak to him on a subject on which I can explain myself only to him. It will then be in his power to take counsel of you, my dear Prince."

After a lapse of some days, I was summoned by the Emperor Francis, who told me that early on that day he had called upon the Emperor Alexander in consequence of a request from him for a personal interview on a most important subject. "You will learn," said his Majesty, "what the

subject is from this document, which he committed to my careful consideration. You know I do not like to express myself on a subject which I have not thoroughly examined. I have therefore taken this paper, which is written in the Emperor Alexander's own hand, and reserved to myself the power of expressing an opinion upon it. Read and examine it, and tell me your opinion of the document, which does not please me at all; it has indeed excited the most grave reflections in my mind."

No very severe examination was required on my part to see that the paper was nothing more than a philanthropic aspiration clothed in a religious garb, which supplied no material for a treaty between the monarchs, and which contained many phrases that might even have given occasion to religious misconstructions.

On the projected treaty, therefore, my views coincided with those of the Emperor Francis; and as the Emperor Alexander had told the Emperor Francis that the document was to be shown to the King of Prussia, his Majesty ordered me to go to the King and ask his opinion of it. I found the King also agreed with the Emperor Francis, except that he hesitated to reject the views of the Russian monarch entirely. However, we came to an agreement as to the impossibility of executing the document without some absolutely necessary changes in the text. Even to this the Emperor Francis did not quite agree.

In consequence of this, I was charged by both monarchs to go to the Emperor Alexander as their common representative. In a conversation of several hours, I succeeded, not without great difficulty, in persuading the author of the necessity of changing several sentences and omitting some passages entirely.

I gave his Majesty, my Imperial master, an account of the objections which I had made without reserve about this, at any rate, useless scheme, and of my prediction of the malicious interpretation which I felt certain it would not escape.

The Emperor Francis, although he did not approve the project even when modified, agreed to sign it, for reasons which I for my part could not oppose.

This is the history of the "Holy Alliance," which even in

the partial feeling of its originator had no other object than that of a moral demonstration, whilst in the eyes of the other persons concerned the document had no such meaning, and therefore does not deserve the interpretation which was afterwards put on it by party spirit.

The most unanswerable proof of the correctness of this statement exists in the circumstance that never afterwards did it happen that the "Holy Alliance" was made mention of between the cabinets, nor indeed could it have been mentioned. Only the parties hostile to the monarchs used it as a weapon for the calumniation of the purest intentions of their opponents.

The "Holy Alliance" was not an institution to keep down the rights of the people, to promote absolutism or any other tyranny. It was only the overflow of the pietistic feeling of the Emperor Alexander, and the application of Christian principles to politics.

From a union of religious and political-liberal ideas the "Holy Alliance" was developed under the influence of Frau von Krüdener and Monsieur Bergasse. No one is so well acquainted as I am with the circumstances of this "loud-sounding nothing."

In conclusion, I may be allowed to throw a passing glance over the Austrian Monarchy, and to give in a few lines the picture of a country which to foreigners has always had the character of a *terra incognita.*

The kingdom, which only since 1806 has taken the name of the Austrian Empire, is like no other either in its origin or its maturity. To the Ostmark of the Empire many other districts have been added under the House of Hapsburg, which were formerly separated from each other by history or nationality. These have brought to this dynasty in the course of generations a great possession, not, with few exceptions, by way of conquest, but by hereditary succession, contracts of marriage, and voluntary submission with reservation of individual rights. That these rights and reservations were generally maintained by the rulers, when they were not forfeited by single portions of the Empire, is a truth which the party spirit and political strife of foreigners may attack but can never destroy. If this may be maintained in general of

the rulers of the House of Hapsburg, the reign of the Emperor Joseph II. is an exception in the history of Austria, the consequences of which, so far from answering the expectations of that monarch, have led the kingdom and the government into difficulties in exact opposition to his intentions.

From the singular formation of the whole kingdom, united under a succession of rulers unbroken for centuries, arose the extraordinary want of a name for this whole—a want which is shown by its appellation of the "House of Hapsburg," or the "House of Austria." This case is unique in the history of states, for in no other country has the name of the ruling family been used instead of the name of the country in ordinary, and still less in diplomatic, usage. Not until 1806, at the same time with the extinction of the German Imperial dignity, did the Emperor Francis give to his Empire the name of the "Empire of Austria," which appellation was not chosen arbitrarily, but was a necessity, and gave the appearance as if the parts were united to the whole and to each other only by a personal union.

The coronation of the Emperor should form the keystone of the new edifice. This design was executed in the Patent of 1806, but, from the circumstances of the times, not carried into effect. Subsequently there were two moments when this omission might have been repaired: first, the General Peace; secondly, at the accession of the first successor to the Founder of the Austrian Empire. Both times I raised my voice in favor of the coronation. According to my views, deputations from all parts of the monarchy should assist at the coronation, thus performing an act of common homage to the common head of the State, whilst they should receive the assurance of the maintenance of the constitutional rights of each country.

The Empire of Austria, without being a federal state, had yet the advantage and the disadvantage of a federal constitution. If the head of the house was in the modern sense of the word absolute, this notion was restricted in its sovereign power, according to the different constitutions of the several countries whose crowns he united on his own head. That this position was a most peculiar one cannot be doubted; and it is no less certain that it would have been untenable,

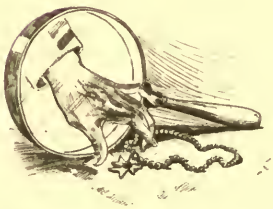
if it had not been founded on the most important of motives—namely, the interest of the different parts of the Empire in being united. These facts, which were clearly seen by the Emperor and myself, exercised a decided influence on the reconstruction of the Empire in the years 1813 to 1815.

The union of the former Austrian Netherlands and of the districts known under the name of the Austrian *Vorlande* with the Austrian Empire would, in the years just mentioned, not only not have been objected to, but the reunion of Belgium with the Empire was even desired by the Allied Powers on natural political grounds. We rejected it, in consequence of a consideration, not referring to our Empire alone, but to the great work of peace. We wished to remove our country from direct contact with France, and thus put an end to the wars which had been in consequence of this contact perpetually occurring between the two neighboring empires. For France is the country where innovations of all kinds are most easily introduced, but where old accustomed impressions last the longest. From this latter reason, the altered situation of Austria and France, after the return of the old dynasty to the French throne, was not noticed either by the public or even in the cabinet, and there was in many minds the same idea of wars between France and Austria as if the geographical position of the two countries was the same as in the times of Francis I. and Louis XIV.

The Act of Congress had placed the possessions of the kingdom and the states on firm foundations. The four Powers which had so successfully driven back France into her old boundaries, admitted the French crown into their alliance replaced in its former rights. From the Quadruple Alliance, dissolved in consequence of its political end being attained, arose the moral Pentarchy, whose power was afterwards established, limited, and regulated in the Congress of Aix-la-Chapelle.

Thus the foundations of a lasting Peace were secured as far as possible.

THE END



EUGENE VIDOCQ

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THE ORIGINAL MODEL OF OUR STORY-BOOK THIEVES AND DETECTIVES

1775-1857

(INTRODUCTORY NOTE)

The entire modern flood of clever story-book thieves and detectives, with their thousand successful disguises and subtle plots, had their origin in the actual and historic career of Eugene Vidocq, head of the French detective force from 1812 to 1825. Vidocq's own "Memoirs" have been to a large extent forgotten by the reading public, who have turned to newer and more imaginary detective heroes; but Vidocq's narrative still remains the richest mine of adventures upon which modern novelists continue to draw.

These "Memoirs" were authorized and to some extent actually written by Vidocq himself. In the preface to the original French edition Vidocq protests with true Gallic vehemence against the "editor" who has so distorted his statements as to make him seem an unsympathetic and unattractive personage. With such an editor and such an original, the reader will probably scarce need the caution that the story should not be trusted too implicitly. The memoirs do, however, give correctly the general outline of Vidocq's remarkable career, and they are faithful to the spirit of their day. They show us with horrible truth the days of the French Revolution from the under side, the miseries of the people, their degeneration, and the utter disorder of all ordinary affairs of government and police.

Let us briefly summarize Vidocq's amazing career. He stole from his parents as a boy; became a wandering thief and roisterer, entered the army of the French Republic in its early days, and served there with some credit until his knavery plunged him into fresh disasters. He had become a notorious leader among thieves when, in 1796, he was condemned to the galleys for eight years. He repeatedly escaped and was recaptured. Finally in 1808 he offered his services to the Paris police to betray his former comrades. From this time onward he attached himself to the side of the law. So valuable were his services that he secured the confidence of his superiors and rose rapidly in the police

service to his rank of chief detective, and held the place for over a dozen years. His successes, his tricks and his disguises were the talk of Paris. He was a newspaper hero. By 1825, however, the suspicion grew strong that the clever reformed thief was still in league with some of his former comrades, that he was in fact playing the game from both ends. He was dismissed from the police force, and then published his "Memoirs" in 1828. Afterwards he opened a private detective agency; but this was soon closed by the police, and the enterprising Vidocq then consented to live quietly in his old age.

MEMOIRS OF VIDOCQ

I

I WAS born at Arras; my continual disguises, the flexibility of my features, and a singular power of grimacing, having cast some doubt concerning my age, it will not be deemed superfluous to declare here, that I was brought into the world on the 23d of July, 1775, in a house adjoining that in which Robespierre was born, sixteen years before. It was night; the rain fell, lightning flashed, the thunder rolled; and a relation, who was both midwife and fortune-teller, predicted that my career would be a stormy one.

However that may be, we will presume that the sky was not troubled on my special account; and although there is always something very attractive in the marvelous, I am far from thinking that the turbulence of the elements had much reference to my birth. I had a most robust constitution, and there was plenty of me, so that as soon as I was born, they took me for a child of two years of age; and I gave tokens of that athletic figure, that colossal form, which have since struck terror into the most hardened and powerful ruffians. My father's house being situated in the Place d'Armes, the constant resort of all the blackguards of the vicinity, I had my muscular powers early called into action, in regularly thrashing my comrades, whose parents were always complaining of me to my father and mother. At home, nothing was talked of but torn ears, black eyes, and rent garments; at eight years of age, I was the terror of all the dogs, cats, and children of the neighborhood; at thirteen, I handled a foil with no little skill and address. My father, perceiving that I associated chiefly with the military of the garrison, was alarmed for

me, and desired me to prepare myself for the first receiving of the communion: two devotees undertook to prepare me for this solemn duty. God knows what fruit I have gathered from their lessons. I began, at the same time, to learn the trade of a baker, which was my father's business, in which he intended that I should succeed him, although I had an elder brother.

My employment principally consisted in carrying bread through the city. During my rounds, I made frequent visits to the fencing-rooms, of which my parents were not long in ignorance; but the cooks all gave such testimony of my politeness and punctuality, that they winked at this trifling prank. This went on until they discovered a deficiency in the till, of which they never took away the key. My brother, who visited it in the same manner as myself, was detected in the very act, and sent off in a hurry to a baker at Lille. The day after this event, which had not been explained to me, I was about to explore, according to custom, the convenient drawer, when I perceived that it was carefully closed. The same day, my father desired me to use more alacrity in my rounds, and to return at a certain hour. It was then evident that from that day forward I should be equally deprived of liberty and money. I bewailed this twofold calamity, and hastened to impart it to a comrade named Poyant, older than myself. As a hole was cut in the counter to drop the money through, he first advised me to introduce a feather dipped in glue; but this ingenious expedient only produced me very small pieces of money, and it became necessary for me to employ a false key, which was made for me by a blacksmith's son. I then dipped again into the till, and we spent together the fruits of these pilferings at a public-house, where we had established our headquarters. There assembled, attracted by the master of the house, a great many well-known rogues, and some unfortunate young fellows, who, to get replenished pockets, used the same expedient as myself. I soon joined the society of the most abandoned vagabonds of the country, who initiated me into all their villainies. Such was the honorable society in the bosom of which I spent my leisure hours, until one day my father surprised me, as he had done my brother, took away my key, heartily thrashed me, and took such precau-

tions as totally cut off all my hopes of ever again getting a dividend from the receipts therein deposited.

My only resource was now to take my tithes from the bakings. Occasionally I pilfered a loaf or two; but as in disposing of them I was compelled to sell them very cheaply, I scarcely by their sale obtained sufficient to regale myself with tarts and honey. Necessity makes us active. I had an eye for everything; all was agreeable to me—wine, sugar, coffee and liquors. My mother had never known her provisions to disappear so quickly, and perhaps would not have discovered so soon, but two chickens which I had resolved on disposing of to my own peculiar profit, raised their voices to accuse me. Hid in my breeches pocket, and concealed by my baker's apron, they thrust out their heads and crowed; and my mother, thus informed of their intended fate, came out to prevent it. She gave me several cuffs on the head, and sent me supperless to bed. I did not sleep a wink, and it was, I think, the evil spirit that kept me awake; all I know is, that I rose with the determination to lay hands on all the plate. One thing alone gave me uneasiness. On each piece the name of VIDOCQ was engraved in large letters. Poyant, to whom I broached the matter, overruled all difficulties; and the same day, at dinner time, I swept off ten forks and as many coffee-spoons. Twenty minutes afterwards the whole was pawned, and the next day I had not a farthing left of the hundred and fifty francs which they lent me on them.

I did not return home for three days, and on the third evening I was arrested by two police-officers, who conveyed me to the Baudets, a place in which mad persons were confined, together with those committed for trial, and the rogues of the district. I was kept in a dungeon for ten days, without being told the cause of my arrest, and then the jailer told me that I had been imprisoned at the desire of my father. This information a little composed me. It was a paternal correction that was inflicted on me, and I accordingly judged that its continuance would not be rigorous. My mother came to see me the next day, and I was pardoned. Four days afterward I was set at liberty, and I returned to work with a determination and promise of henceforward conducting myself irreproachably. Vain resolve! I soon resumed my old habits,

except extravagance; and I had excellent reasons for no more playing the prodigal; for my father, who had before been rather careless and regardless, now exercised a vigilance that would have done credit to the commandant of an advanced guard. If he left the post at the counter, my mother relieved guard. It was impossible for me to approach it, although I was constantly on the look out. This put me in despair. At last one of my tavern companions took pity on me; it was Poyant again—that thorough rogue, of whose abilities in this way the citizens of Arras may still preserve the memory. I confided my sorrows to his friendly bosom. "What a precious fool you are (said he) to remain thus; and what business has a lad of your age to be short of a farthing? Ah! were I in your place, I know what I would do." "Well, what?" "Your parents are rich, and a thousand crowns, more or less, would not hurt them. The old misers! they are fair game, and we must carry it off." "I understand, we must grasp at once what we cannot get in detail." "You're right; and then we will be off, neither seen nor known." "Yes, but the police." "Hold your tongue! are you not their son? and your mother is too fond for that." This consideration of my mother's love, united to the remembrance of her indulgence after my late freaks, was powerfully persuasive. I blindly adopted a project which smiled on my audacity. It only remained to put it in execution, and an opportunity was not long wanting.

One evening, whilst my mother was at home alone, a confidant of Poyant came kindly to tell her that, engaged in a debauch with some girls, I was fighting everybody, and breaking and destroying everything in the house; and that, if I were not stopped, there would be at least a hundred francs to pay for the damage done.

At this moment my mother was seated in her chair knitting; the stocking dropped from her hand, she arose with haste, and ran with great alarm to the place of the pretended affray, which had been fixed on at the extremity of the city. Her absence could not be of long continuance, and we hastened to profit by it. A key which I had stolen from the old lady procured us admittance into the shop. The till was closed. I was almost glad to meet with this obstacle. I re-

called the memory of my mother's love for me, not as an inducement to commit the act with impunity, but as exciting feelings of coming remorse. I was going to retire. Poyant held me; his infernal eloquence made me blush for what he called my weakness; and when he presented me with a crow-bar, with which he had the precaution to provide himself, I seized it almost with enthusiasm. The chest was forced. It contained nearly 2000 francs, (upward of £80,) which we shared, and half an hour afterward I was alone on the road to Lille. In the trouble which this affair threw me into, I walked at first very quickly, so that when I reached Lens I was much fatigued. A return chaise passed, into which I got, and in less than three hours arrived at the capital of French Flanders, whence I immediately started for Dunkirk, being excessively anxious to place myself beyond the reach of pursuit.

I had resolved on visiting the new world. My fate forbade this project. The port of Dunkirk was empty, I reached Calais, intending to embark immediately, but they asked me more than the whole sum in my possession. I was induced to hope that at Ostend the fare would be less; and on going there found the captains not more reasonable than at Calais. Thus disappointed I fell into that adventurous disposition, which induces us to throw ourselves voluntarily into the arms of the first enterprise that offers. Whilst I was walking, I was accosted by a person whose benevolent appearance gave me rather a favorable impression of him. The first words he addressed to me were questions. He had learnt that I was a stranger; he told me that he was a ship-broker; and when he learnt the cause of my coming to Ostend, he offered his services. "Your countenance pleases me," said he, "I like an open face; there is in your features the air of frankness and joviality, which I like, and I will prove it to you by procuring for you a passage for almost nothing." I spoke of my gratitude. "No thanks, my friend; that will be soon enough when your business is completed, which I hope will be soon; but surely you will be tired of waiting about in this manner?" I said that certainly I was not very much amused. "If you will accompany me to Blakemberg, we will sup there together, with some jolly fellows, who are very fond of

Frenchmen." The broker was so polite, and asked me so cordially, that I thought it would be ungentlemanly to refuse, and therefore accepted his invitation. He conducted me to a house where some very agreeable young ladies welcomed us with all that ancient hospitality which did not confine itself only to feasting. At midnight, probably—I say, probably, for we took no account of hours—my head became heavy, and my legs would no longer support me; there was around me a complete chaos, and things whirled in such a manner, that without perceiving that they had undressed me, I soon fell soundly asleep. On waking I found myself cold; instead of the large green curtains, which had appeared to me in my sleep, my heavy eyes only gazed on a forest of masts, and I heard the watchful cry which only echoes in the sea-ports. I endeavored to rise, and my hand touched a heap of cordage, against which I was leaning. Did I dream then, or had I dreamt the previous evening? I felt about, I got up, and when on my feet I found that I did not dream, and what was worse, that I was not one of the small number of those personages whom fortune favors while sleeping. I was half naked, and except two crowns and six livres, which I found in one of my breeches pockets, I was penniless. It was then but too clear to me, as the broker had said, "my business had soon been done." I was greatly enraged, but what did that avail me? I was even unable to point out the spot where I had been thus plundered. I made up my mind and returned to the inn, where I had some clothes which remedied the deficiencies of my attire. I had no occasion to tell my misfortune to the landlord. "Ah, ah!" said he to me, as far off as he could see me, "here comes another. Do you know, young man, that you have got off well? You return with all your limbs, which is lucky when one gets into such a hornet's nest; you now know what a land-shark is; they were certainly beautiful sirens! All pirates are not on the sea, you observe, nor all the sharks within it; I will wager that they have not left you a farthing." I drew my two crowns from my pocket to show them to the inn-keeper. "That will be," said he, "just enough to pay your bill," which he then presented. I paid it and took leave of him, without however quitting the city.

The sea was open to me as a profession, and I resolved to betroth myself to it, at the risk of breaking my neck thirty times a day, by climbing, for eleven francs a month, up the rigging of a ship. I was ready to enter like a novice, when the sound of a trumpet suddenly arrested my attention; it was not that of a regiment, but of Paillasse (Merry-Andrew) and his master, who, in front of a show bedecked with the emblem of an itinerant menagerie, were awaiting the mob which never hisses the vulgar exhibitions. I saw the beginning; and whilst a large crowd was testifying its gratification by loud shouts of laughter, it occurred to me that the master of Paillasse might give me employment. Paillasse appeared to me a good fellow, and I was desirous of securing his protection; and as I knew that one good turn deserves another, when he got down from his platform, on saying "*follow the crowd,*" thinking that he might be thirsty, I devoted my last shilling in offering him half a pint of gin. Paillasse, sensible of this politeness, promised instantly to speak for me, and as soon as our half-pint was finished, he presented me to the director. He was the famous Cotte-Comus: he called himself the first physician of the world, and in traversing the country, had united his talents to those of the naturalist Garnier, the learned preceptor of General Jacquet, whom all Paris saw in the square of the Fountains before and after the Revolution. These gentlemen had with them a troop of rope-dancers. Comus, as soon as I appeared before him, asked me what I could do. "Nothing," said I. "In that case," said he, "they will teach you; there are greater fools than you, and then besides, you have not a clumsy appearance. We shall see if you have a taste for the stage; then I will engage you for two years; the first six months you shall be well fed, and clothed; at the end of that time you shall have a sixteenth of the profits; and the year following, if you are bright, I will give you a share like the others; in the meantime, my friend, I will find occupation for you."

Thus was I introduced, and then went to partake of the flock-bed of the obliging merry-andrew. At the break of day we were awakened by the sonorous voice of our master, who leading me to a kind of small room, said, whilst showing me the lamps and wooden chandeliers—"There is your em-

ployment; you must clean these and put them in proper order; do you understand? And afterward you must clean out the cages of the animals, and brush the floors." I went about my job which did not greatly please me; the tallow disgusted me, and I was not quite at my ease with the monkeys, who, enraged to see a fool to whom they were not accustomed, made inconceivable efforts to tear my eyes out. But I yielded to iron necessity. My duty performed, I appeared before the director, who said that I was an apt pupil, and that if I was assiduous he would do something for me. I rose early, and was very hungry; it was ten o'clock, but no signs of breakfast were visible, and yet it was agreed that I should have bed and board. I was sinking from want, when they gave me a piece of brown bread, so hard, that being unable to get through with it, although gifted with sharp teeth, and a famous appetite, I threw the greater portion amongst the animals. I was obliged to light up in the evening, and as, from want of practice, I did not evince in my occupation all possible dispatch, the director, who was a brute, administered to me a slight correction, which he renewed the next and following days. A month had not elapsed, before I was in a wretched condition; my clothes, spotted with grease and torn by the monkeys, were in rags; I was devoured by vermin; hard diet had made me so thin, that no one would have recognized me; and then it was that there arose in all imaginable bitterness the regrets for my paternal home, where good food, soft bed, and excellent clothing were mine, and where I had no monkeys to make clean and feed.

I was in this mood, when one morning Comus told me, that after due consideration he was convinced that I should make an admirable tumbler. He then placed me under the tuition of Sieur Balmate, called the "little devil," with orders to train me. My master just escaped breaking my loins at the first bend which he compelled me to make. I took two or three lessons daily. In less than three weeks, I was able to execute with much skill the monkey's leap, the drunkard's leap, the coward's leap, &c. My teacher, delighted at my progress, took pains to forward me; a hundred times I thought that in developing my powers he would dislocate my limbs. At length we reached the difficulties of the art, which be-

came more and more complicated. At my first attempt at the grand fling, I nearly split myself in two; and in the chair-leap, I broke my nose. Bruised, maimed, and tired of so perilous a business, I determined on telling Comus that I had no desire to become a vaulter. "Oh, you do not like it," said he; and without objecting to my refusal gave me a sound thumping. I then left Balmate and returned to my lamps.

Comus had given me up, and it was now for Garnier to give me a turn. One day, after having beaten me more than usual, (for he shared this pleasing office with Comus), Garnier, measuring me from head to foot, and viewing with a marked delight the dilapidation of my doublet, through which my flesh was visible, said to me, "I like you; you have reached the point that pleases me. Now, if you are obedient it remains with yourself to be happy; from to-day you must let your nails grow; your hair is already of a sufficient length; you are nearly naked, and a decoction of walnut-tree leaves will do the rest." I did not understand what Garnier meant, when he called my friend Paillasse and desired him to bring the tiger skin and club. Paillasse obeyed—"Now," said Garnier, "we will go through the performance. You are a young savage from the South Seas, and moreover a cannibal; you eat raw flesh, the sight of blood puts you in a fury, and when you are thirsty, you introduce into your mouth flints which you crack; you utter only broken and shrill sounds, you open your eyes widely, your motions are violent; you only move with leaps and bounds; finally, take for your model the ourang-outang who is in cage number one." During this lesson, a jar full of small stones quite round was placed at my feet, and near it a cock which was tired with having its legs tied together; Garnier took it, and offered it to me, saying, "Gnaw away at this." I would not bite it; he threatened me, I rebelled, and demanded to be released; to which he replied by a dozen cuffs of the ear. But he did not get off scot-free; irritated at this usage, I seized a stake, and should assuredly have knocked the naturalist on the head, if the whole troop had not fallen on me, and thrust me out at the door with a shower of blows from the fists and kicks of the feet.

Some days afterward, I was at the same public-house, with

a showman and his wife, who exhibited puppets in the open street. We made acquaintance, and I found that I had inspired them with some feelings of interest. The husband pitied me for having been condemned to what he termed the society of beasts. He compared me with Daniel in the lions' den. We may see that he was learned, and intended for something better than to play "Punch." At a later period he superintended a provincial theatrical company, and perhaps superintends it still. I shall conceal his name. The embryo manager was very witty, though his wife did not perceive it; he was very ugly, which she plainly perceived. She was one of those smart brunettes with long eyelashes, whose hearts are of most inflammable material, which deserves a better destiny than to light a fire of straw. I was young, and so was the lady: she was only sixteen, her husband thirty-five. As soon as I found myself out of place, I went to see this couple; it struck me that they would advise me correctly. They gave me some dinner, and congratulated me on having dared to free myself from the despotic yoke of Garnier. "Since you are your own master," said the husband to me, "you had better accompany us: you will assist us; at least, when we are three in number, we shall have no lost time between the acts; you will move the actors, whilst Eliza goes round with the hat; thus the public will be attracted and not go off, and the profits will be more abundant. What say you, Eliza?" Eliza answered, that she would do in this respect all he might desire, and besides, she entirely agreed with him; and at the same time gave me a look which bespoke that she was not displeased, and that we should soon understand each other. I accepted the new employ with gratitude, and at the next representation I was installed in my office. The situation was infinitely superior to that at Garnier's. Eliza, who, despite my leanness, had discovered that I was not so badly made as I was clothed, made a thousand secret advances, to which I was not backward in reply: at the end of three days she said she loved me. I was not ungrateful; we were happy, and constantly together. At home, we only laughed, played, and joked. Eliza's husband took all that for child's sport; when at work we were side by side under a narrow cabin, formed of four cloth rags, dig-

nified by the splendid title of "Theater of Amusing Varieties." Eliza was on the right of her husband, and I on her right hand, and filled her place when she was not there to superintend the exits and entrances. One Sunday the play was in full representation, and there was a crowded audience round the stage. Punch had beaten everybody, and our master having nothing more to do with one of his personages (the Sergeant of the Watch) wished it to be removed, and called for his assistant. We heard him not. "Assistant, assistant," he repeated with impatience, and at a third time turning round he saw us enfolding each other in a close embrace. Eliza, surprised, sought for an excuse, but the husband, without listening, cried out again, "Assistant," and thrust against his eye the hook which served to suspend the sergeant. At the same moment the blood flowed, the representation was interrupted, and a battle ensued between the two married people; the show was overturned, and we were exposed in the midst of a numerous crowd of spectators, from whom this scene drew a lengthened peal of applause and laughter.

This disaster again threw me on the wide world, without a home to shelter my head. If I had had a decent appearance, I might have procured a situation in a respectable family, but my appearance was so wretched that no one would have anything to say to me. In my situation I had but one resource, that of returning to Arras: but then how to exist on the road? I was a prey to these perplexities, when a person passed near me whom I took by his appearance to be a peddler. I entered into conversation with him, and he told me he was going to Lille; that he sold powders, opiates, and elixirs, cut corns, relieved bunions, and sometimes extracted teeth. "It is a good trade," added he, "but I am getting old, and want somebody to carry my pack; it is a stiff-backed fellow like you that I need, with a firm foot, and steady eye; so if you like we will tramp it together."—"Willingly," was my reply, and without any further stipulation, we went on our way together. After an eight hours' walk, night drew on, and we could scarcely see our way, when we halted before a wretched village inn.—"Here it is," said the itinerant doctor, knocking at the door.—"Who is there?" cried a hoarse

voice. "Father Godard with his pack," answered my guide; and, the door immediately opening, we found ourselves in the midst of a crowd of peddlers, tinkers, quack-doctors, umbrella-venders, showmen, &c., who hailed my new master, and ordered a plate to be brought for him. I thought they would do me equal honor, and I was about to seat myself at table, when the host, striking me familiarly on the shoulder, asked me if I was not mountebank of father Godard. "Who do you call a mountebank?" said I with astonishment. "The merry-andrew, then." I confess that, despite of the recent reminiscences of the menagerie, and the Theater of Amusing Varieties, I felt mortified at such an appellation. But I had a devil of an appetite, and as I thought that supper would follow the interrogatory, and that, after all, my situation with father Godard had not been accurately defined, I consented to pass for his mountebank. On my answering, the host led me at once to a neighboring spot, a sort of barn, where a dozen of fellows were smoking, drinking, and playing at cards. He said that they would send me in something to eat. Soon afterward a stout wench brought me in a mess in a wooden bowl, on which I fed with the utmost avidity. A loin of mutton was swimming in a sea of pot-liquor with stringy turnips: I cleared the whole up in a twinkling. This done, I laid myself down with the other packmen's valets on some piles of straw, which we shared with a camel, two muzzled bears, and a crowd of learned dogs. The vicinity of such bedfellows was not the most pleasing; but it was necessary to put up with it. I did not close my eyes, whilst all the others snored away most gloriously.

Father Godard paid for all, and however bad were the beds and the fare, as we drew near Arras, it was necessary that I should not quit him. At length we reached Lille, which we entered on a market day. By way of losing no time, father Godard went straight to the principal square, and desired me to arrange his table, his chest, his vials, and packets, and then proposed that I should go and announce his arrival around the place. I had made a good breakfast, and the proposition disgusted me; I could put up with sleeping with a dromedary, and carrying his baggage from Ostend to Lille, but to go round in parade, at ten leagues from Arras—No!

I bade adieu to father Godard, and then set out toward my native city, of which the clock soon became visible. Having reached the foot of the ramparts, before the closing of the gates, I trembled at the idea of the reception I should meet with: one moment I was tempted to beat a retreat, but fatigue and hunger could not allow that: rest and food were vitally necessary: I wavered no longer, and ran toward my paternal roof. My mother was alone in the shop: I entered, and throwing myself at her feet, wept, whilst I entreated her forgiveness. The poor old woman, who hardly recognized me, so greatly was I altered, was softened. She had not power to repulse me, and even appeared to have forgotten all. She reinstated me in my old chamber, after having supplied all my wants. But it was necessary to tell my father of my return. She did not feel courage to face his first bursts of anger: a priest of her acquaintance, the almoner of the regiment of Anjou, garrisoned at Arras, undertook to be the bearer of the words of peace; and my father, after having vowed fire and flames, consented to pardon me. I trembled lest he should prove inexorable, and when I learnt that he had yielded, I jumped for joy. The almoner brought the news to me, and followed it up with a moral application, which was no doubt very touching, but I do not remember a word of it; I only recollect that he quoted the parable of the Prodigal Son, which was in truth a history similar to my own.

My adventures had made some noise in the city; everybody was anxious to hear them from my own lips. But no one, except one actress of the Arras company, took more interest in them than two milliners of the Rue de Trois Visages: I paid them frequent visits. However, the actress soon obtained the exclusive privilege of my attention, and an intrigue followed, in which, disguised as a young girl, I renewed at her house some scenes from the romance of Faublas. A sudden journey to Lille with my conquest, her husband, and a very pretty little maid servant, who passed me off for her sister, proved to my father that I had soon forgotten the troubles of my first campaign. My absence was not of long continuance: three weeks had scarcely elapsed, when, from want of money, the actress refused any longer to allow me to form part of

the baggage. I returned quietly to Arras, and my father was confounded at the straightforward way with which I asked his consent to enter the army. The best he could do was to comply, which he did; and the next day I was clad in the uniform of the Bourbon regiment. My height, good figure, and skill in arms, procured for me an appointment in a company of chasseurs. Some old veterans took offense at it, and I sent two to the hospital in consequence, where I soon joined them myself, on being wounded by one of their comrades. This commencement gave me notoriety, and they took a malicious pleasure in reviewing my past adventures; so that at the end of six months, Reckless,—for they bestowed that name upon me,—had killed two men and fought fifteen duels. . . .

In this extremity, I had recourse to my abilities; and some fencing-masters, to whom I spoke of my situation, gave me a benefit at a fencing-match, which produced me a hundred crowns. Set up with this sum, which for a time secured me from want, I frequented public places, balls, &c. I then formed an intimacy, of which the circumstances and consequences decided the destiny of my whole life. Nothing could be more simple than the commencement of this important episode of my history. I met at the Bal de la Montague with a young lady, with whom I was soon on good terms. Francine, for that was her name, appeared much attached to me, and at every moment made me protestations of fidelity, which did not, however, prevent her from giving private interviews to a captain of engineers.

I one day surprised them supping at a tavern in the place Riourt, and transported with rage, I heartily thumped the astonished pair. Francine, with her hair hanging loose, fled; but her partner remained, and making a charge against me, I was arrested and conducted to the prison of Petit Hôtel. Whilst my trial was preparing, I was visited by many females of my acquaintance, who made it a duty to offer me their consolations. Francine learnt this, and her jealousy aroused, she dismissed the unfortunate captain, withdrew the charge against me which she had made at the same time with his, and beseeching me to receive her, I weakly consented. The judges heard of this fact, which was tortured into a pre-

meditated plan between me and Francine, and I was sentenced to three months' imprisonment.

From the Petit Hôtel I was transferred to St. Peter's Tower, where I obtained a chamber called the Bull's-eye. Francine remained with me there for a part of the day, and the remainder I passed with the other prisoners, amongst whom were two old sergeant-majors, Grouard and Herbaux, the latter son of a boot-maker at Lille, both condemned for forgeries; and a laborer, named Boitel, condemned to six years' confinement for stealing garden-tools; this latter, who was the father of a large family, was always bewailing his imprisonment, which, he said, deprived him of the means of working a small farm, which he only knew how to turn to advantage. In spite of the crime he had committed, much interest was evinced in his favor, or rather toward his children, and many inhabitants of his district had drawn up and presented petitions in his favor, which were as yet unanswered, and the unfortunate man was in despair, often repeating that he would give such and such a sum for his liberty. Grouard and Herbaux, who were in St. Peter's Tower, waiting to be sent to the galleys, thought they could get him pardoned by means of a memorial, which they drew up, or rather plotted together; a plan which was ultimately so injurious to me.

Grouard began to complain that he could not work quietly in the midst of the uproar of the common room, in which were eighteen prisoners singing, swearing, and quarreling all day, Boitel, who had done me some little kind offices, begged me to lend my chamber to the compilers of his memorial, and I consented, although very unwillingly, to give it up to them for four hours a day. From the next morning they were there installed, and the jailer frequently went there secretly. These comings and goings, and the mystery which pervaded them, would have awakened suspicions in a man accustomed to the intrigues of a prison, but ignorant of their plans, and occupied in drinking with the friends who visited me, I interested myself but too little with what was going on in the Bull's-eye.

At the end of eight days, they thanked me for my kindness, telling me that the memorial was concluded, and that they had every reason to hope for the pardon of the petitioner,

without sending it to Paris, from the influence of the representations of the people at Lille. All this was not very clear to me, but I did not give it much attention, thinking it no business of mine; and there was no occasion for me to concern myself. But it took a turn which threw blame on my carelessness, for scarcely had forty-eight hours elapsed after the finishing of the memorial, when two brothers of Boitel arrived by express, and came to dine with him at the jailer's table. At the end of the repast, an order arrived, which being opened by the jailer, he cried, "Good news, by my faith! It is an order for the liberation of Boitel;" at these words they all arose in confusion, embraced him, examined the order, and congratulated him; and Boitel, *who had sent away his clothes, &c. the previous evening,* immediately left the prison without bidding adieu to any of the prisoners.

Next day, about ten o'clock in the morning, the inspector of the prisons came to visit us; and on the jailer's showing him the order for Boitel's liberation, he cast his eye over it, said that it was a forgery, and that he should not allow the prisoner to depart until he had referred to the authorities. The jailer then said that Boitel had left on the previous evening. The inspector testified his astonishment that he should have been deceived by an order signed by persons whose names were unknown to him, and at last placed him under a guard. He then took the order away with him, and soon made himself certain that, independently of the forgery of the signatures, there were omissions and errors in form which must have struck any person at all familiar with such papers.

It was soon known in the prison, that the inspector had placed the jailer under arrest, for having allowed Boitel to go out under a false order, and I began to surmise the truth. I desired Grouard and Herbaux to tell me the whole, observing indistinctly, that the affair might compromise me; but they swore most solemnly that they had done nothing but draw up the memorial, and were themselves astonished at its prompt success. I did not believe a word of this, but having no opposing proofs, I was compelled to wait for the event. The next day I was summoned to the court, before the judge, and

answered, that I knew nothing of the framing of the forged order, and that I had only lent my room, as the only quiet place in the prison, for the preparation of the justificatory memorial. I added, that all these facts could be corroborated by the jailer who frequently went into the room during their work, appearing to be much interested for Boitel. Grouard and Herbaux were also interrogated, and then placed in solitary confinement, whilst I returned to my chamber. Scarcely had I entered it, when Boitel's bed-fellow came to me, and told me the whole plot, which I had only before suspected.

Grouard, hearing Boitel so often repeat that he would willingly give a hundred crowns to procure his liberty, had planned with Herbaux the means of getting him out, and they had devised no mode so simple as that of forging a false order. Boitel was let into the plot, as may be supposed. They only told him that, as there were many persons to gain over, he must give four hundred francs. It was then that they applied for my chamber, which was indispensable for the due concoction and forging of the order, without being perceived by the other prisoners. Moreover, the jailer was in their confidence, to judge by his frequent visits, and by the circumstances which had preceded and followed the departure of Boitel. The order had been brought by a friend of Herbaux, named Stofflet. He appeared besides only to decide Boitel on giving four hundred francs, which the forger had persuaded him was to be shared with me, although I rendered him no other service than that of lending my room.

Thus instructed, I at first wished the person who had given me these particulars to make a declaration of them, but he obstinately refused, saying that he would not reveal to justice a secret confided to his oath; and besides, he did not feel desirous of being knocked on the head by the prisoners for *turning nose, (pour avoir mangé le morceau)*. He dissuaded me even from informing the judge, telling me that I was in no danger. But on arresting Boitel in the country, and bringing him to Lille, and putting him into solitary confinement, he named as the aiders and abettors of his escape, Grouard, Herbaux, Stofflet and Vidocq. On this confession, we were questioned at the tower, and I persisted in my first declaration, although I could have extricated myself in a moment

by disclosing all that Boitel's bed-fellow had told me; but I was so fully convinced that it was impossible to substantiate any charge against me, that I was thunderstruck when, at the expiration of my three months, I was prevented from quitting the prison by an entry stating me as arraigned as an "accomplice in the forgery of authentic and public documents."

II

I THEN began to think that this affair might turn out badly for me; but any other statement, without proof, would be more dangerous to me than silence, which it was now too late to think of breaking. All these reflections affected me so much that I had a severe illness, during which time Francine attended me most carefully. I was scarcely convalescent, when, unable to support the state of incertitude in which I found my affairs, I resolved on escaping, and to escape by the door, although that may appear a difficult step. Some particular observations made me prefer this method in preference to any other. The wicket-keeper at St. Peter's Tower was a galley-slave from the Bagne (place of confinement) at Brest, sentenced for life. After the revision of the penal laws and the code of 1791, he had obtained a commutation of six years' confinement in the prison at Lille, where he had made himself useful to the jailer, who, persuaded that a man who had passed four years at the Bagne must be as watchful as an eagle, since he must know every method of escape, promoted him to the office of gate-keeper, which he thought he could not confide to more trustworthy hands. It was, however, on the stupidity of this prodigy of cunning that I relied for the success of my project; and it appeared the more easy to deceive him, as he was so confident in his own sagacity. In a word, I relied on passing by him in the disguise of a superior officer, charged with visiting St. Peter's Tower, which was used as a military prison, twice a week.

Francine, whom I saw daily, got me the requisite clothing, which she brought me in her muff. I immediately tried them on, and they suited me exactly. Some of the prisoners who saw me thus attired, assured me that it was impossible to detect me. I was the same height as the officer whose character I was about to assume, and I made myself appear twenty-

five years of age. At the end of a few days he made his usual round, and whilst one of my friends occupied his attention, under pretext of examining his food, I disguised myself hastily, and presented myself at the door, which the jailkeeper, taking off his cap, opened, and I went out into the street. I ran to a friend of Francine's, as agreed on in case I should succeed, and she soon joined me there.

I was there perfectly safe, if I could resolve on keeping concealed; but how could I submit to a slavery almost as severe as that of St. Peter's Tower. As for three months I had been enclosed within four walls, I was now desirous to exercise the activity so long repressed. I announced my intention of going out; and, as with me an inflexible determination was always the auxiliary of the most capricious fancy, I did go. My first excursion was safely performed, but the next morning, as I was coming to the Rue Ecremoise, a sergeant named Louis, who had seen me during my imprisonment, stopped me, and asked if I was free. He was a severe, practical man, and by a motion of his hand could summon twenty persons. I said that I would follow him; and begging him to allow me to bid adieu to my mistress, who was in a house of Rue de l'Hôpital, he consented, and we really met Francine, who was much surprised to see me in such company; and then I told her that having reflected that my escape might injure me in the estimation of my judges, I had decided on returning to St. Peter's Tower to await the result of the process.

Francine did not at first comprehend why I had expended three hundred francs, to return at the end of four months to prison. A sign put her on her guard, and I found an opportunity of desiring her to put some cinders in my pocket whilst Louis and I took a glass of rum, and then set out for the prison. Having reached a deserted street, I blinded my guide with a handful of cinders, and regained my asylum with all speed.

Louis having made his declaration, the gendarmes and police-officers were on the full cry after me; and there was one Jacquard amongst them who undertook to secure me if I were in the city. I was not unacquainted with these particulars, and instead of being more circumspect in my be-

havior, I affected a ridiculous bravado. It might have been said that I ought to have had a portion of the premium promised for my apprehension. I was certainly hotly pursued, as may be judged from the following incident.

Jacquard learned one day that I was going to dine in Rue Notre-Dame. He immediately went with four assistants, whom he left on the ground-floor, and ascended the staircase to the room where I was about to sit down to table with two females. A recruiting sergeant, who was to have made the fourth, had not yet arrived. I recognized Jacquard, who, never having seen me, had not the same advantage, and besides my disguise would have bid defiance to any description of my person. Without being at all uneasy, I approached, and with the most natural tone I begged him to pass into a closet, the glass door of which looked on the banquet-room. "It is Vidocq whom you are looking for," said I; "if you will wait for ten minutes you will see him. There is his cover, he cannot be long. When he enters, I will make you a sign; but if you are alone, I doubt if you can seize him, as he is armed and resolved to defend himself."—"I have my gendarmes on the staircase," answered he, "and if he escapes——" "Take care how you place them then," said I, with affected haste. "If Vidocq should see them he would mistrust some plot, and then farewell to the bird."—"But where shall I place them?"—"Oh, why in this closet—mind, no noise, that would spoil all; and I have more desire than yourself that he should not suspect anything." My commissary was now shut up in four walls with his agents. The door, which was very strong, closed with a double lock. Then, certain of time to escape, I cried to my prisoners, "You are looking for Vidocq—well, it is he who has caged you; farewell." And away I went like a dart, leaving the party shouting for help, and making desperate efforts to escape from the unlucky closet.

Two escapes of the same sort I effected, but at last I was arrested and carried back to St. Peter's Tower, where, for greater security, I was placed in a dungeon with a man named Calendrin, who was also thus punished for two attempts at escape. Calendrin, who had known me during my first confinement in the prison, imparted to me a fresh plan of escape, which he had devised by means of a hole worked in the wall

of the dungeon of the galley-slaves, with whom we could communicate. The third night all was managed for our escape, and eight of the prisoners who first went out were so fortunate as to avoid being detected by the sentinel, who was only a short distance off.

Seven of us still remained, and we drew straws, as is usual in such circumstances, to determine which of the seven should first pass. I drew the short straw, and undressed myself that I might get with greater ease through the hole, which was very narrow, but, to the great disappointment of all, I stuck fast, without the possibility of advancing or receding. In vain did my companions endeavor to pull me out by force; I was caught as if in a trap, and the pain of my situation was so extreme, that not expecting further help from within, I called to the sentry to render me assistance. He approached with the precaution of a man who fears a surprise, and presenting his bayonet to my breast, forbade me to make the slightest movement. At his summons the guard came out, the porters ran with torches, and I was dragged from my hole, not without leaving behind me a portion of my skin and flesh. Torn and wounded as I was, they immediately transferred me to the prison of Petit Hôtel, where I was put into a dungeon, fettered hand and foot.

Ten days afterward I was placed among the prisoners, through my entreaties and promises not to attempt again to escape. Up to this time I had lived with men who were sharpers, robbers, and forgers; but here I found myself in the midst of most hardened villains, and of this number was one of my fellow-townsmen, named Desfosseux, a man of wonderful ingenuity, prodigious strength, and who, condemned to the galleys from the age of eighteen, had escaped from the Bagne three times, whence he was to be sent again with the next chain of convicts. He told all his exploits and hair-breadth escapes with much coolness, and said that no doubt "one day or other the guillotine would make sausage-meat of his flesh." In spite of the secret horror with which this man inspired me, I took a pleasure in conversing with him of the wild life he had led, and what most induced me to make so many inquiries of him was, that I hoped he would be able to aid me with some means of escape.

[Vidocq here narrates several further escapes and recaptures and shifting of prisons.]

III

Worn out by the bad treatment of every species which I experienced in the prison of Douai, tormented by a watchfulness redoubled after my sentence, I took care not to make an appeal, which would keep me there some months. What confirmed me in my resolution was, the information that the prisoners were to be sent forthwith to the Bicètre, and there, making one chain, to be sent on to the Bagne at Brest. It is unnecessary to say, that I relied on escaping on our route. As to the appeal, I was told that I could present a petition for pardon from the Bagne, which would have the same effect. We remained, however, some months at Douai, which made me regret bitterly that I had not made my petition for annulling the sentence.

At length the order of removal arrived, and, what would scarcely be credited from men doomed to the galleys, it was hailed with enthusiasm—so much were we tired of the torments of Marin, the jailer. Our new situation was not, however, much more satisfactory; the officer, Hurtrel, who accompanied us, I know not why, had ordered irons of a new construction, which fastened to each of our legs a ball of fifteen pounds' weight, whilst we were secured two and two by a massive wrist-cuff of iron. Besides, the vigilance was extreme, and it was impossible to think of doing anything by address. An attack by main force could alone save us, and I proposed it to fourteen of my companions, who agreed on it, and it was settled that the project should be put in execution on our way through the forest of Compiègne. Desfosseux was of the party, and by means of fine saws which he had always securely secreted about him, our fetters were cut in three days; the plaster of a particular sort of gum prevented our keepers from perceiving the trace of the instruments.

On reaching the forest and gaining the appointed spot, the signal was given, the fetters fell from us, and we leaped from the carriages which enclosed us to try and gain the thicket; but the five gendarmes and the eight dragoons who escorted

us charged sword in hand. We entrenched ourselves behind the trees, armed with the stones which are piled up to mend the roads, and with some weapons we had got hold of at the first moment of confusion. The soldiers hesitated for an instant, but, well armed and well mounted, they soon made up their minds, and at the first charge two of our party fell dead, five more terribly wounded, and the others falling on their knees cried for mercy. Surrender was now imperative; and Desfosseux, myself, and some others who had escaped, got into the carriage, when Hurtrel, who had kept at a very respectful distance from the affray, came up to a poor wretch, who certainly did not hurry himself very much, and thrust his saber through him. Such baseness enraged us; the prisoners who had not yet ascended the carriages took up stones, and but for the aid of the dragoons, Hurtrel would have been knocked on the head. The soldiers bid us desist before we brought down destruction on ourselves: and the thing was so evident, that we were compelled to lay down our arms, that is the stones. This circumstance, however, put a termination to the annoyances of Hurtrel, who never approached us but with fear and trembling.

At Senlis, we were placed in the temporary prison, one of the most horrible I ever tenanted. The jailer, exercising the office of street-keeper, the prison was guarded by his wife. And what a creature was she! As we had made ourselves notorious, she thrust us into the most secret dungeons, convincing herself by previous personal examination that we had nothing about us that could aid escape. We were, however, trying the walls, when we heard her roar out, "Rascals, I am coming to you with my bastinado. I will teach you how to play music!" We took her at her word, and all desisted. The next day we reached Paris, and were lodged in the outer boulevards, and at four in the afternoon we got in sight of Bicêtre.

On reaching the end of the avenue which looks on the road to Fontainebleau, the carriages turned to the right, and entered an iron gate, above which I read mechanically this inscription—"Hospice de la vieillesse," (Hospital for the aged). In the fore court many old men were walking, clothed in gray garments. They were paupers, and stared at us with that

stupid curiosity which results from a monotonous and purely animal existence; for it often happens that a person admitted into an hospital, having no longer his own subsistence to provide for, renounces the exercise of his narrow faculties, and ends by falling into a state of perfect idiocy. On reaching the second court, in which was the chapel, I remarked that the majority of my companions hid their faces with their hands or pocket-handkerchiefs. It may be supposed that they experienced some feelings of shame. No; they were only thinking of allowing their faces to be seen as little as possible, so that if opportunity presented, they might the more easily escape.

"Here we are," said Desfosseux to me. "You see that square building? That is the prison." We alighted at an iron door, guarded inside by a sentry. Having entered the office, we were only registered, our description being deferred until the next day. I perceived, however, that the jailer looked at us, Desfosseux and me, with a sort of curiosity, and I thence concluded that we had been recommended by the officer Hurtrel, who had preceded us a quarter of an hour from the time of the business of the forest of Compiègne. Having opened many low doors, guarded with iron plates, and the Bird-cage Wicket, we were introduced to a large yard, where about sixty prisoners were playing at fives, and shouting so loudly as to sound all over the place. At our appearance their game ceased, and surrounding us, they examined with much surprise the irons which loaded us. It was, besides, to enter Bicètre in the most favorable manner to be decked with such caparisons, for they estimated the deserts of the prisoner —that is to say, his boldness and talent for escape—by the precautions taken to secure him. Desfosseux, who found himself amongst friends, had no difficulty in introducing us as the most distinguished personages of the north. He did more; he particularly expatiated on my merits, and I was accordingly surrounded and made much of by all the worthies of the prison: Beaumont, Guillaume, Mauger, Jossat, Maltaisé, Corun, Blondy, Troaflat and Richard, one of the parties concerned in the murder of a Lyons courier, never left me. As soon as my fetters were taken off, they took me to a drinking-shop, where for two hours I did justice to a thousand invita-

tions, when a tall man with a police-officer's cap, who they told me was the room inspector, took us to a large place called Le Fort Mahon, when we were clothed in the prison garb, consisting of a frock half gray and half black. The inspector told me I should be brigadier, that is, that I should preside at the giving out of the provisions amongst my table companions, and I had, in consequence, a good bed, whilst others slept on camp couches. In four days I was known to all the prisoners; but although they had the highest opinion of my courage, Beaumont, wishing to try me, picked a quarrel with me. We fought, and as he was an expert boxer, I was completely conquered. I, however, had my revenge in a room, where Beaumont, unable to display the resources of his art, had the worst of it. My first defeat, however, gave me a desire to be instructed in the mysteries of this art, and the celebrated Jean Goupel, the Saint George of boxing, who was at the Bicêtre with us, soon counted me among those of his pupils who were destined to do him the most honor.

The prison of the Bicêtre is a neat quadrangular building, enclosing many other structures and many courts, which have each a different name; there is the grand cour (great court), where the prisoners walk; the cour de cuisine (or kitchen court); the cour des chiens (or dog's court); the cour de correction (or court of punishment); and the cour des fers (or iron court). In this last is a new building five stories high; each story contains forty cells, capable of holding four prisoners. On the platform, which supplies the place of a roof, was night and day a dog named Dragon, who passed in the prison for the most watchful and incorruptible of its kind; but some prisoners managed at a subsequent period to corrupt him through the medium of a roasted leg of mutton, which he had the culpable weakness to accept; so true is it, that there are no seductions more potent than those of gluttony, since they operate indifferently on all organized beings. To ambition, to gaming, and to gallantry, there are bounds fixed by nature; but gluttony knows nothing of age, and if the appetite sometimes opposes its inert power we are quits with it by a good fit of indigestion. However, the Amphytrions escaped while Dragon was swallowing the mutton; he was beaten and taken into the cour des chiens, where, chained up and de-

prived of the free air which he had breathed on the platform, he was inconsolable for his fault, and perished piecemeal, a victim of remorse at his weakness in yielding to a moment of gluttony and error.

Near the erection I speak of is the old building, nearly arranged in the same way, and under which were dungeons of safety, in which were enclosed the troublesome and condemned prisoners. It was in one of these dungeons that for forty-three years lived the accomplice of Cartouche, who betrayed him to procure this commutation! To obtain a moment's sunshine, he frequently counterfeited death so well that when he had actually breathed his last sigh, two days passed before they took off his iron collar. A third part of the building, called La Force, comprised various rooms, in which the prisoners were placed who arrived from the provinces, and were destined, like ourselves, to the chain.

At this period, the prison of Bicêtre, which is only strong from the strict guard kept up there, could contain twelve hundred prisoners; but they were piled on each other, and the conduct of the jailers in no way assuaged the inconvenience of the place: a sullen air, a rough tone, and brutal manners, were exercised toward the prisoners, and they were in no way to be softened but through the medium of a bottle of wine, or a pecuniary bribe. Besides, they never attempted to repress any excess or any crime, and provided that no one sought to escape, they might do whatever they pleased in the prison, without being restrained or prevented. Whilst men condemned for those attempts which modesty shrinks from naming, openly practiced their detestable libertinism, and robbers exercised their industry inside the prison, without any person attempting to check the crime or prevent the bestiality.

If any man arrived from the country well clad, who, condemned for a first offense, was not as yet initiated into the customs and usages of prisons, in a twinkling he was stripped of his clothes, which were sold in his presence to the highest bidder. If he had jewels or money, they were alike confiscated to the profit of the society, and if he were too long in taking out his ear-rings, they snatched them out without the sufferer daring to complain. He was previously warned, that if he

spoke of it, they would hang him in the night to the bars of his cell, and afterward say that he had committed suicide. If a prisoner, out of precaution, when going to sleep, placed his clothes under his head, they waited until he was in his first sleep, and then they tied to his foot a stone, which they balanced at the side of his bed; at the least motion the stone fell, and, aroused by the noise, the sleeper jumped up, and before he could discover what had occurred, his packet, hoisted by a cord, went through the iron bars to the floor above. I have seen, in the depth of winter, these poor devils, having been deprived of their property in this way, remain in the court in their shirts until some one threw them some rags to cover their nakedness. As long as they remained at Bicêtre, by burying themselves, as we may say, in their straw, they could defy the rigor of the weather; but at the departure of the chain, when they had no other covering than the frock and trousers made of packing-cloth, they often sank exhausted and frozen before they reached the first resting place.

It is necessary, by facts of this nature, to explain the rapid depravity of men whom it was easy to excite to honest feelings; but who, unable to escape the height of misery but by excess of wickedness, sought an alleviation of their lot in the real or apparent exaggeration of all species of crime. In society, we dread infamy; in the society of prisoners, there is no shame but in not being sufficiently infamous. The condemned prisoners are a distinct people; whoever is cast amongst them must expect to be treated as an enemy as long as he will not speak their language, and will not identify himself with their way of thinking.

The abuses I have mentioned are not the only ones; there are others even more terrible. If a prisoner were marked out as a false brother or as a sneak, he was pitilessly knocked on the head, without any jailer interfering to prevent it. Matters came to such a pitch, that it was necessary to assign a particular division to those individuals, who, giving an account of their own doings, had made any mention of their comrades which they thought could in any way compromise them. On the other hand the impudence of the robbers, and the immoralities of their keepers, were carried to such an extent, that they prepared openly in the prison tricks of swindling and

theft, which were to be perpetrated on quitting the walls of the prison.

As for me, always occupied with the idea of escaping from the Bagne, and reaching a seaport whence I could embark, I was night and day plotting the means of getting away from Bicêtre. I at length imagined that by breaking through the quadrangle of Fort-Mahon, and reaching the water-courses made under it, we might by means of a short mine, get into the court of the idiots I have before alluded to, whence there would be no difficulty in reaching the outside. This project was executed in ten days and as many nights. During the whole time, the prisoners of whom we had any distrust were always accompanied by a trusty man; but we were obliged to wait until the moon should be on the wane. At length, on the 3d of October, 1797, at two o'clock in the morning, we descended the water-course, thirty-three in number, provided with dark lanterns, and we soon opened the subterranean passage and reached the court of the idiots. We wanted a ladder, or something instead of it, to climb the walls, and at last got hold of a long pole, and we were going to draw lots to decide who should first climb up, when a noise of chains suddenly broke the silence of night.

A dog came out from a kennel placed in an angle of the court. We stood motionless and held our breath, for it was an important moment. After having stretched himself out and yawned, as if he had only wanted to change place, the animal put one foot into his kennel as if about to return, and we then thought ourselves saved. Suddenly he turned his head to the place in which we were huddled together, and fixed on us two eyes which looked like burning coals. A low growling was then followed with barkings which sounded all over the place. Desfosseux wished to try and cut his throat, but he was of a size to render the issue of a contest doubtful. It appeared best to us to lie down in a large open space, which served as a walking-ground for the idiots; but the dog still kept up the concert, and, his colleagues having joined him, the din became so excessive, that the inspector Giroux, fancying something particular was passing amongst his lodgers, and knowing his customers, began his round by Fort-Mahon, and almost fell backward at finding no one. At his

cries, the jailer, turnkeys, and guard all assembled. They soon discovered the road we had taken, and taking the same to get into the court of the idiots, they loosened the dog, who ran straight at us. The guards then entered the place where we were with fixed bayonets, as if about to carry a redoubt. They put handcuffs on us, the usual prelude of any important matter to be done in a prison; and we then returned, not to Fort-Mahon, but to the dungeon, without, however, experiencing any bad treatment.

This attempt, the boldest of which the prison had for a long time been the theater, threw the keepers into so much confusion, that it was two days before they perceived that one of the prisoners of Fort-Mahon was missing. It was Desfosseux. Knowing all his address, I thought him at a distance, when, on the morning of the third day, I saw him enter my dungeon, pale, exhausted and bleeding. When the door was closed on him he told me all his adventure.

At the moment when the guard had seized us he had squatted down in a sort of tub, probably used for baths, and hearing no noise, he had left his retreat; and the pole had aided him in climbing several walls; but yet he always got back to the idiots' court. Day was just breaking, and he heard footsteps going and coming in the buildings, for they are nowhere earlier than in hospitals. It was necessary to avoid the gaze of the turnkey, who would soon be in the courts; the wicket of a room was half open—he glided in, and was about with much precaution to roll himself in a large heap of straw; but what was his astonishment to see it occupied by a man naked, his hair disheveled, beard long, and eye haggard and bloodshot. The madman, for such he was, looked at Desfosseux with a fierce air, then made him a quick sign: and as he stood still, darted at him as if to attack him. A few caresses seemed to appease him; he took Desfosseux by the hand and made him sit down beside him, heaping all the straw round him in the manner and with the gestures of a monkey. At eight o'clock a morsel of black bread fell in at the door, which he took up, looked at, threw into a heap of dirt, and then picked it up and began to eat. During the day more bread was brought; but as the madman was asleep, Desfosseux seized and devoured it, at the risk of being himself devoured by his terrible com-

panion, who might have been enraged at the abstraction of his pittance. At twilight the madman awoke, and talked for some time with inconceivable volubility; night came on and his excitement sensibly increased, and he began to leap about and make hideous contortions, shaking his chains with a kind of pleasure.

In this appalling situation Desfosseux waited with impatience until the madman fell asleep, to go out at the wicket. About midnight, hearing him move no longer, he advanced first one leg and then the other, when he was seized by the madman with a powerful grasp, who threw him on the straw and placed himself before the wicket, where he remained till daylight, motionless as a statue. The next night another attempt, and another obstacle. Desfosseux, who grew distracted, employed his strength, and a tremendous struggle ensued; Desfosseux, being struck by his chains, and covered with bites and blows, was compelled to call for the keepers. They mistaking him at first for one of the madmen who had got loose, were also about to put him in a cell; but he managed to make himself known, and at length obtained the favor of being brought back to us.

We remained eight days in the dungeon, after which I was put in the Chaussée, where I found a party of prisoners who had received me so well on my arrival. They were making good cheer and denied themselves nothing; for, independently of the money procured by the "letters of Jerusalem," they had got a supply from some females whom they knew, and who constantly visited them. Having become, as at Douai, the object of special vigilance, I still sought to escape: when at length the day arrived for the departure of the chain.

IV

It was the 20th of November, 1797: all the morning we remarked a more than usual commotion in the prison. The prisoners had not left their cells, and the gates were every moment opened and shut with much noise: the jailers went to and fro with a busy air, and they were knocking off irons in the great court, of which the sound reached our ears. About eleven o'clock two men, clothed in blue uniforms, entered Fort-Mahon, where for eight days I had been replaced with the

companions of my essay to escape: it was the captain of the chain and his lieutenant. "Well," said the captain, smiling in a kind of familiar way, "have we any return horses (fugitive galley-slaves)?" And whilst he spoke all pressed about, trying who should testify the most respect to him. "Good-day, M. Viez: good-day, M. Thierry," resounded on all sides. These salutations were even repeated by the prisoners who had never seen either Viez or Thierry, but who, assuming an air of acquaintance, hoped to get some favor. It was no wonder if Viez was a little giddy with so much applause; but as he was accustomed to these homages it did not quite turn his brain, and he knew very well what he was about. He perceived Desfosseux. "Ah! ah!" said he, "here is a darby cutter (one skilled in cutting off his chains), who has traveled before with us. I heard that you had a narrow escape of being a head shorter (guillotined at Douai), my boy. You escaped well, by Jove; for look you, it is better to go back to the meadow (Bagne) than let the executioner play at pitch and toss with your knowledge-box (head). Besides, my lads, let the world be quiet, and we shall get beef and celery." The captain had only begun his inspection and continued it, addressing similar jokes to all his "merchandise," for by that name he called the condemned prisoners.

The critical moment arrived, and we went into the Cours des Fers, where the house-surgeon came to us to examine if we were all in a state to bear the fatigues of a journey. We were all pronounced adequate, although some were in a most woeful plight. Each prisoner then puts off the prison livery, and assumes his own clothes; those who have none have a frock and trousers of packing-cloth, insufficient to protect them from the cold and damp. Hats and clothes, if at all decent, belonging to the prisoners, are torn in a particular way to prevent escape; they take, for instance, the border off the hat and the collar from the coat. No prisoner is allowed to retain more than six francs; the overplus is given to the captain, who gives it on the route in proportion as it is needed. This precaution is easily eluded by placing louis in large sous hollowed out.

These preliminaries adjusted, we went into the great court, where were the guards of the chain, better known as argousins,

or galley-sergeants, who were for the most part men of Auvergne, water-carriers, messengers, or coalmen, who carried on their trade in the intervals between the journeys. In the midst of them was a large wooden chest, containing the fetters which are used in all similar expeditions. We were made to approach two and two, taking care to match us in height, by means of a chain of six feet in length, united to the cordon of twenty-six prisoners, who could thus only move in a body; each was confined to the chain by a sort of iron triangle, called the cravat, which, opening on one side by a turning screw, is closed on the other with a nail firmly riveted. This is the most perilous part of the operation; the most turbulent and riotous then keep quiet; for at the least movement, instead of falling on the anvil, the blows would break their skull, which every stroke of the hammer grazes. Then a prisoner comes with long scissors and cuts off the hair and whiskers of the prisoners, pretending to leave them irregular.

At five in the evening, the fettering was finished; the argousins retired, and the prisoners alone remained. Left to themselves, far from despairing, these men gave themselves up to all the tumults of riotous gayety. Some vociferated horrible jokes, echoed from all sides with the most disgusting shouts; others amused themselves by provoking the stupid laughter of their companions by beastly gestures. Neither the ears nor the modesty were even spared, all that was heard or seen was immoral and discordant. It is too true that, once loaded with fetters, the condemned thinks himself obliged to trample under foot all that is honored and respected by the society which has cast him off; there are for him no longer any restraints, but from material obstacles; his charter is the length of his chain, and he knows no law but the stick to which his jailer accustoms him. Thrown amidst beings to whom nothing is sacred, he takes care how he testifies that steady resignation which betokens repentance; for then he would be the butt of a thousand jokes; and his keepers, troubled at his serious mood, would accuse him of meditating some plot. It is best, if he would keep them unsuspicious of his intentions, that he should always appear reckless and abandoned. A prisoner who sports with his destiny is never an object of mistrust; the experience of the greater part of the wretched beings who have

escaped from the Bagne prove this. What is certain, is that with us, those who had the greatest interest in escaping were the least dejected; they were the leaders. When night came on, they began to sing. Imagine fifty scoundrels, the greater part drunk, all screeching different airs. In the midst of this din a "return horse" thundering out with the lungs of a Stentor, some couplets of the "Galley-Slave's Complaint."

All our companions were not so happy; in the third cordon, composed of the least disorderly, we heard sobs, saw tears flowing; but these symptoms of grief, or of repentance, were hailed by the shouts and threats of the two other cordons, where I figured in the first rank as a dangerous fellow, from my address and influence.

Our riot was interrupted by loud cries, proceeding from the second division. They were knocking on the head three prisoners, the ex-commissary of war Lemière, the staff-major Simon, and a robber named the Petit Matelot (little sailor), who were accused of having betrayed their comrades by information, or of having defeated some plot in prison. The person who had pointed them out to the vengeance of the galley-slaves was a young man, who would have been a good study for a painter or an actor. With dilapidated green slippers, a hunting-waistcoat destitute of buttons, and nankeen pantaloons, which seemed to defy the inclemency of the weather; his head-dress was a helmet without a peak, through the holes of which a tattered night-cap was visible. In the Bicêtre, he was only known by the name of "mademoiselle," and I learned that he was one of those degraded wretches, who abandon themselves in Paris to a course of the most disgusting debaucheries. The argousins, who ran at the first noise, did not give themselves the least trouble to get the Petit Matelot from the hands of the galley-slaves, and he died four days afterward of the blows he had received. Lemière and Simon would also have perished but for my interference; I had known the former when in the roving army, where he had rendered me some service. I declared that it was he who had supplied me with the tools necessary for undermining the walls at Fort Mahon, and thenceforward they left him and his companion unmolested.

We passed the night on the stones in a church, then con-

verted into a magazine. The argousins made regular rounds, to assure themselves that no one was engaged in fiddling (sawing their fetters). At daybreak we were all on foot; the lists were read over, and the fetters examined. At six o'clock we were placed in long cars, back to back, the legs hanging down outside, covered with hoar frost and motionless from cold. On reaching St. Cyr we were entirely stripped, to undergo a scrutiny which extended to our stockings, shoes, shirt, mouth, ears, nostrils, &c., &c. It was not only the files in cases which they sought, but also for watch-springs, which enable a prisoner to cut his fetters in less than three hours. This examination lasted for upward of an hour, and it is really a miracle that one-half of us had not our noses or feet frozen off with cold. At bed-time, we were heaped together in a cattle stall, where we lay so close that the body of one served for the pillow of the person who lay nearest to him, and if any individual got entangled in his own, or any other man's chain, a heavy cudgel rained down a torrent of blows on the hapless offenders. As soon as we had lain down on a few handfuls of straw, which had already been used for the litter of the stable, a whistle blew to command us to the most absolute silence, which was not allowed to be disturbed by the least complaint, even when, to relieve the guard placed at the extremity of the stable, the argousins actually walked over our bodies.

The supper consisted of a pretended bean soup, and a few morsels of half-moldy bread. The distribution was made from large wooden troughs, containing thirty rations: and the cook, armed with a large pot ladle, did not fail to repeat to each prisoner, as he served him, "One, two, three, four, hold out your porringer, you thief;" the wine was put into the same trough from which the soup and meat were served out, and then an argousin, taking a whistle, hanging to his button-hole, blew it thrice; saying, "Attention, robbers, and only answer by a yes, or a no. Have you had bread?"—"Yes." "Soup?"—"Yes." "Meat?"—"Yes." "Wine?"—"Yes." "Then go to sleep, or pretend to do so."

A table was laid out at the door, at which the captain, lieutenant, and chief argousins, seated themselves to take a repast superior to ours; for these men, who profited by all occasions

to extort money from the prisoners, took excellent care of themselves, and ate and drank abundantly. At this moment the stable offered one of the most hideous spectacles that can be imagined; on one side were a hundred and twenty men herded together like foul beasts, rolling about their haggard eyes, whence fatigue or misery banished sleep; on the other side, eight ill-looking fellows were eating greedily without, not for one moment losing sight of their carbines or their clubs. A few miserable candles, affixed to the blackened walls of the stable, cast a murky glare over this scene of horror, the silence of which was only broken by stifled groans, or the clank of fetters. Not content with striking us indiscriminately, the argousins made their detestable and brutal witticisms about the prisoners; and if a man, fevered with thirst, asked for water, they said to him, "Let him who wants water put out his hand." The wretch obeyed, mistrusting nothing, and was instantly overwhelmed with blows. Those who had any money were necessarily careful; they were but very few, the long residence of the majority in prison having, for the most part, exhausted their feeble resources.

These were not the only abuses which marked the progress of the galley chain. To economize to his own profit the expenses of the journey, the captain generally made one of the cordons to go on foot. But this cordon was always that of the strongest men, that is, the most turbulent of the condemned. Woe to the females whom they met, or the shops which they came near. The women were assaulted in the grossest manner, and the shops stripped in a twinkling, as I saw at Morlaix, at a grocer's, who did not save even a loaf of sugar, or a pound of soap. It may be asked what the guards were about during the commission of this offense? The guards were pretending to be very busily preventing it, but without opposing any real obstacle to it, knowing that they would ultimately profit by the plunder; since the prisoners must sell their booty through their medium, or exchange with them for strong liquors. It was the same with the thefts made on the prisoners who were added to the chain in its passage; scarcely were they ironed, when their neighbors hustled them, and took from them all the little sums they might have.

Far from preventing or checking these spoliations, the

argousins even suggested them, as I saw them do with an ex-gendarme, who had sewed up a few louis in his leather breeches. "Here is some fat!" said they, and in less than three minutes the poor devil was penniless. At such times the party attacked call out loudly for the argousins, who take good care not to approach until the robbery be perfected, and they thump, with heavy cudgels, the poor wretch who has been plundered. At Rennes, the bandits I am speaking of carried their infamy to such an extent as to despoil a sister of charity, who had brought us some tobacco and money, in a stall where we were to pass the night. The most crying of these abuses have disappeared, but many yet exist, which it will be difficult to root out, if we consider to what sort of men the conducting of the chain must be intrusted, and the materials they have to work upon.

Our toilsome journey endured for twenty-four days, and on reaching Pont-à-Lezen, we were placed in the depot of the Bagne, when the prisoners perform a kind of quarantine, until they have recovered from their fatigue, and it has been ascertained whether they have any contagious disease. On our arrival we were washed in pairs, in large tubs filled with warm water, and on quitting the bath our clothes were allotted to us. I received, like the others, a red frock or cassock, two pairs of trousers, two sail-cloth shirts, two pairs of shoes, and a green cap; each garment and article were marked with the initials GAL, and the cap had besides a tin plate, on which was the number of the entry in the register. When they had given us our clothing, they riveted an iron ring round the leg, but did not couple us.

The depot of Pont-à-Lezen, being a sort of lazaretto, there was not a very rigorous vigilance kept up. I was even told that it was easy to get out of the rooms and climb the outside walls. I learned this from a man named Blondy, who had once escaped this way from the Bagne at Brest, and hoping to profit by this information, I made arrangements to avail myself of the first opportunity. We sometimes had loaves given to us, weighing eighteen pounds each, and on quitting Morlaix, I had hollowed out one of these, and filled it with a shirt, a pair of trousers, and some handkerchiefs. It was a new kind of portmanteau, and passed unsuspected.

Lieutenant Thierry had not given me to a special watch; on the contrary, having learned the grounds of my condemnation, he had told the commissary, when speaking of me, that with men as orderly as I was, he could manage the chain as easily as a girls' school. I had then inspired no mistrust, and looked about me to execute my project. I at first contemplated cutting through the wall of the room in which I was placed. A steel chisel, left by accident on the foot of my bed by a turnkey prisoner, who riveted the ankle cuffs, served me to make the opening, whilst Blondy cut my irons. This completed, my comrades made a figure of straw, which they put in my place, to deceive the vigilance of the argousins on guard, and soon, clothed in the garments I had concealed, I got into the court-yard of the depot. The walls which environed it were at least fifteen feet high, and to climb them I found I must get something like a ladder; a pole served as a proxy, but it was so heavy and so long that it was impossible for me to drag it over the wall, to aid my descent on the other side. After many trials, as vain as they were painful, I was compelled to risk the leap, in which I succeeded so badly, and came down with so much violence on my legs, that I could scarcely drag myself into a bush that was near. I hoped, that when the pain had somewhat abated, I could escape before daybreak, but it became more excessive, and my feet swelled so prodigiously, that I was compelled to give up all hopes of escape. I dragged myself along, as well as I was able, to the door of the depot, to return to my cell, thinking thereby to diminish the number of blows which would be assuredly bestowed upon me. A sister whom I asked for, and to whom I told all, had me conveyed into a room, where my feet were dressed. This excellent woman, who compassionated my lot, went to the commandant of the depot, and obtained my pardon by her solicitations, and at the end of three weeks, being completely recovered, I was conveyed to Brest.

The Bagne is situated in the bosom of the bay; piles of guns, and two pieces of cannon, mounted at the gates, pointed out to me the entrance, into which I was introduced, after having been examined by the two guards of the establishment. The boldest of the condemned, however hardened, have confessed that it is impossible to express the emotions of horror

excited by the first appearance of this abode of wretchedness. Each room containing twenty night camp couches, called bancs (benches), on which lie six hundred fettered convicts, in long rows, with red garbs, heads shorn, eyes haggard, dejected countenances, whilst the perpetual clank of fetters conspires to fill the soul with horror. But this impression on the convict soon passes away, who feeling that here he has no cause to blush at the presence of any one, soon identifies himself with his situation. That he may not be the butt of the gross jests and filthy buffoonery of his fellows, he affects to participate in them; he even exceeds them; and soon in tone and gesture this conventional depravity gets hold of his heart. Thus, at Anvers, an ex-bishop experienced, at first, all the out-pourings of the riotous jokes of his companions; they always addressed him as monseigneur, and asked his blessing in all their obscenities; at every moment they constrained him to profane his former character by blasphemous words, and, by dint of reiterating these impieties, he contrived to shake off their attacks; at a subsequent period he became the public-house keeper at the Bagne, and was always styled monseigneur, but he was no longer asked for absolution, for he would have answered with the grossest blasphemies.

The inconveniences and abuses that existed at the prison of Brest when I was conducted thither, were additional inducements to make my sojourn as brief as possible. In such a situation, the first thing is to assure oneself of the discretion of the comrade with whom we may be coupled. Mine was a vine-cutter from Dijon, about thirty years old, condemned to twenty-four years' labor for forcible burglary; already half an idiot, misery and brutal treatment had completely stupefied him. Bowed beneath the stick, he seemed to have just preserved the instinct of a monkey or a dog, and thus answered the whistle of the galley-sergeants. He was of no use to me, and I was compelled to look out for a mate who would not fear or shrink from the prospective beatings which are always liberally bestowed on convicts suspected of favoring, or even conniving at the escape of the prisoner. To get rid of Bourguignon, I feigned indisposition, and he was yoked to another, and when I recovered, I was placed with a poor devil sentenced to eight years' labor for stealing chickens.

He had not entirely parted with his senses, and the first time we were alone together said to me—"Listen, comrade; I can see you do not mean to live long at the public expense—be frank with me, and you will not lose by it." I told him that I intended to escape at the first opportunity. "Well," said he, "I advise you to bolt before the beasts of sergeants are quite acquainted with your phiz:—but have you any cash?" I told him that I had, and he then informed me that he could procure me other habiliments, but that I must buy a few utensils like one who meant to work out his time quietly. These utensils were two wooden bowls, a wine-keg, straps to support my fetters, and a small mattress stuffed with oakum. It was Thursday, the sixteenth day of my confinement at the Bagne, and on the Saturday evening I obtained sailor's clothes, which I immediately put on under my convict's frock. On paying the seller of them, I saw that he had about his wrists round cicatrices of deep burns, and I learned, that being condemned to the galleys for life in 1776, he had been put to the torture at Rennes, without confessing the robbery of which he was accused. On the promulgation of the code of 1791, his sentence was commuted to twenty-four years' labor at the galleys.

The next day my division went out, at the cannon's signal, to work at the pump, which was always in motion. At the wicket, they examined, as usual, our manacles and clothing. Knowing this practice, I had pasted over my sailor's garb a bladder painted flesh color. As I purposely left my frock and shirt open, none of the guards thought of examining me more closely, and I got out unsuspected. Arrived at the basin, I retired with my comrade behind a pile of planks, and my fetters having been cut the previous evening, soon yielded. Having got rid of these, I soon threw off my galley-frock and trousers, and putting on under my leather cap a wig which I had brought from Bicêtre, and having given my comrade the trifling recompense which I had promised him, I disappeared, cautiously gliding behind the piles of timber.

V

I PASSED through the wicket without difficulty, and found myself in Brest, a place entirely unknown to me; and the fear

that my doubt as to what road I should take might induce suspicion, increased my uneasiness. At length, after a thousand ins and outs, turnings and twistings, I reached the only gate of the city, where was always stationed an old galley-guard named Lachique, who detected a convict by a look, a motion or a turn; and what rendered his observations more easy was, that whoever passed any time at the Bagne, dragged habitually and involuntarily that leg to which the fetter had been fastened. However, it was necessary to pass this dreaded personage, who was smoking very sedately, fixing his hawk's eye on all who went in and came out. I had been warned, and determined to exercise all my effrontery. On getting up to Lachique, I put down a pitcher of buttermilk, which I had purchased to render my disguise the more complete, and filling my pipe, I asked him for a light. He gave it readily and with all the courtesy he was capable of, and after we had blown a few whiffs in each other's faces, I left him and went on my way.

I went straight forward for three-quarters of an hour, when I heard the cannon shots which were fired to announce the escape of a convict, so that the peasantry of the neighborhood may be informed that there is a reward of one hundred francs to be obtained by the lucky individual who may apprehend the fugitive. I saw many persons armed with guns and scythes scour about the country and beat every bush, and even the smallest tufts of heath. Some laborers appeared to take their arms out with them as a precaution, for I saw several quit their work with a gun which they took out of a furrow. One of these latter passed near me in a cross road which I had taken on hearing the report of the cannon, but they had no suspicion of me, for I was clad very well, and my hat being off, by reason of the heat, they saw my hair curled, which could not be the case with a convict.

I continued striking into all the by-ways, and avoiding towns and detached houses. At twilight I met two women, whom I asked about the road, but they answered me in a dialect which I did not comprehend, but on showing them some money, and making signs that I was hungry, they conducted me to a small village to a cabaret, kept by the garde-champetre (patrol), whom I saw in the chimney nook, decorated

with his insignia of office. I was for a moment disturbed, but soon recovering myself, I said I wished to speak to the mayor. "I am he," said an old countryman with a woolen cap and wooden shoes, seated at a small table and eating an oaten cake. This was a fresh disappointment to me, who relied on escaping in my way from the cabaret to the mayor's house. However, I had the difficulty to contend with, and surpass in some way or other. I told the wooden-shoed functionary, that having lost myself on leaving Morlaix for Brest, I had wandered about, and asking him at the same time how far it was from this latter city, and expressing a desire to sleep there that evening—"You are five leagues from Brest," said he, "and it is impossible to reach it this evening; if you will sleep here, I will give you a bed in my barn, and to-morrow you can start with the garde-champetre, who is going to carry back a fugitive convict whom we apprehended yesterday."

These last words renewed all my terrors, for by the tone in which they were uttered, I saw that the mayor had not credited the whole of my story. I, however, accepted his obliging offer; but after supper, at the instant we reached the barn, putting my hands in my pockets, I cried out with all the energy of a man in despair—"Oh, heavens! I have left at Morlaix my pocket-book, with my passport and eight double louis. I must return this moment, yes, this very moment; but how shall I find my way? If the patrol, who knows the road, would go with me, we should be back in time in the morning to set out early with the galley-slave." This proposal routed all suspicions, for a man who wishes to escape seldom solicits the company he would fain avoid; on the other hand the garde-champetre, smelling a reward, had buttoned on his gaiters at the first word. We set out accordingly, and at break of day reached Morlaix. My companion, whom I had taken care to ply well with liquor on the road, was already pretty well in for it, and I completed him with some rum at the first pot-house we reached in the city. He stayed there to wait for me at a table, or rather under the table, and he might have waited long enough.

I asked the first person I met to direct me to Vannes, and on being told, I set out, as the Dutch proverb has it, "with my feet shod by fear." Two days passed without accident,

but on the third, some leagues from Guemené, at the turning of the road, I met two gendarmes, who were returning from duty. The unexpected vision of yellow breeches and laced hats gave me uneasiness, and I made an effort to escape, when my two gentlemen desired me to halt, making at the same time a very significant gesture with their carbines. They came up to me, and having no credentials to show them, I invented a reply on the spur of the moment. "My name is Duval, born at l'Orient, deserter from the Cocarde frigate, now in the roadstead at St. Maly." It is useless to say, that I had learnt all this during my stay at the Bagne, where we had daily accounts from all parts. "What!" cried the thief, "you must be Auguste—son of father Duval, who lives at l'Orient, on the terrace near the Boule d'Or." I did not deny this, for it would have been worse to have been detected as a fugitive convict. "Parbleu!" added the brigadier, "I am sorry you are caught, but that cannot now be helped; I must send you to l'Orient or to St. Malo." I begged him not to send me to the former of these towns, not caring to be confronted with my new relations, in case they should desire to confirm the identity of my person. However, the quartermaster gave orders that I should be conducted thither, and the next day I reached l'Orient, when I was entered in the jailer's book, at Pontainau, the naval prison, near the new Bagne, which was to be peopled by convicts brought hither from Brest.

Being next day questioned by the commissary of the marine, I again declared that I was Auguste Duval; and that I had left my ship without permission, to go and see my parents. I was then led back to prison, where I found, amongst other sailors, a young man of l'Orient, accused of striking a lieutenant. Having talked some time with him, he said to me one morning, "My boy, if you will pay for breakfast, I will tell you a secret worth knowing." His mysterious air disturbed me, and made me anxious to know all; and after breakfast he said to me, "Trust to me and then I can extricate you. I do not know who you are, but I am sure you are not young Duval, for he has been dead these two years at St. Pierre, at Martinique. (I started.) Yes, he has been dead these two years, but no one knows it, so well are our colonial hospitals

regulated. Now I can give you such statements about his family, that you may pass for him even with his parents, for he left home when he was very young. To make quite sure, you can feign a weakness of intellect, produced by sea toil and sickness. Besides, before Auguste Duval went to sea, he had a mark tattooed on his left arm, as most sailors have; I know it well; it was an altar with a garland on it. If you will remain a fortnight in the cell with me, I will mark you in a similar manner, so that all the world could not detect the imposture.''

My friend appeared frank and open-hearted, and I may account for the interest he took in me, by his desire to trick justice, a feeling that pervades the minds of all prisoners; for them to deceive it, mislead it, or delay it, is a pleasurable vengeance, which they willingly purchase at the expense of a few weeks' confinement. Here was such an opportunity, and the means were soon put in action. Under the windows of our room was a sentinel, and we began by pelting him with pieces of bread; and as he threatened to tell the jailer of us, we dared him to put his menaces into execution. On this, when he was relieved, the corporal, who was a meddling fellow, went to the office; and the next moment the jailer came to take us, without even telling us the reason of our removal. But we soon found it out on entering a sort of hole in the sunken ditch, very damp but tolerably light. Scarcely were we shut in, than my comrade commenced operations, in which he perfectly succeeded. It consisted only in pricking my arm with several needles tied together, and dipped in Indian ink and carmine. At the end of twelve days the wounds closed, so that it was impossible to tell how long they had been made. My companion also took advantage of this ''leisure undisturbed,'' to give me additional details concerning the Duval family, whom he had known from childhood, and was in fact related to them, and instructed even in the minutest habitual trick of my Sosià (false personality).

These instructions were of unspeakable advantage to me when, on the sixteenth day after our detention in the dungeon, I was taken out to be confronted with my father, whom the commissary of marine had sent for. My comrade had so well described him, that I could not be mistaken on perceiving

him. I threw my arms about his neck; he recognized me; his wife, who came soon after, recognized me; a female cousin and an uncle recognized me; and I was so undoubtedly Auguste Duval, that the commissary himself was convinced of it. But this was not sufficient to procure my liberation; as a deserter from the Cocarde, I was to be sent to Saint Malo, where she had left several men at the hospital, and then be tried before the maritime court. To tell the truth I felt no alarm at this; certain that I should find means of escape on my journey, I set out at length, bathed with my parents' tears, and the richer by several louis, which I added to the stock already concealed about me.

Until we reached Quimper, where I was to be handed over to another guard, no opportunity presented of bidding adieu to the company of gendarmes who guarded me, as well as many other individuals, robbers, smugglers, or deserters. We were placed in the town jail, and on entering the chamber where I was to pass the night, I saw at the foot of the bed a red frock, marked on the back GAL, initials but too well known to me. There, covered with a tattered quilt, slept a man, whom, by his green cap decked with the tin plate numbered, I recognized as a galley-slave. Would he know, would he betray me? I was in a spasm of fear, when the individual, awakened by the noise of bolts and bars, sat up in his bed, and I knew him to be a young fellow named Goupy, who went to Brest at the same time as myself. He was condemned to chains for life, for a forcible burglary in the environs of Bernai in Normandy; his father was a galley-sergeant at Brest, where most probably, he did not come first purely for change of air. Not wishing to have him continually before his sight, he had procured an order for his removal to the Bagne at Rochfort, and he was then on his road thither. I told him all my affairs, and he promised secrecy, and kept his promise the more faithfully, as it would have profited him nothing to betray me.

However, the guard did not start immediately, and fifteen days elapsed after my arrival at Quimper, without any mention of departure. This delay gave me the idea of penetrating the wall and escaping; but having found the impossibility of success, I managed so as to obtain the confidence of the jailer, and got an opportunity of executing my project by inspiring

him with an idea of false security. After having told him that I had heard the prisoners plotting something, I pointed out to him the place in the prison where they had been at work. He made most minute search, and naturally enough found the hole I had made; and this discovery procured for me all his kindness. I sometimes found it overpowering, for the watch was kept so regularly that all my schemes were routed. I began to think of going to the hospital, where I hoped to be more fortunate in the execution of my projects. To give myself a high fever, it was only necessary to swallow tobacco-juice for a couple of days, and then the doctors ordered my removal. On getting to the house, I got in exchange for my clothes a gray cap and cloak, and was then put along with the rest.

It was a part of my plan to remain for some time at the hospital, that I might know the ways in and out, but the illness caused by the tobacco-juice would only last for three or four days, and it was necessary to find some recipe which would bring on another complaint; for, knowing no one in the place it was impossible for me to get a supply of tobacco-juice. At Bicêtre, I had been taught how to produce those wounds and sores, by means of which so many beggars excite public pity, and get those alms which cannot be worse bestowed. Of all these expedients, I adopted that which consisted in making the head swell like a bushel; first, because the doctors would certainly be mistaken; and then because it gave no pain, and all traces of it could be removed by the day following. My head became suddenly of a prodigious size, and great was the talk thereof amongst the doctors of the establishment, who not being, as it appeared, blessed with a superabundance of skill, knew not what to think of it. I believe some of them spoke of elephantiasis, or of dropsy in the brain. But, be that as it may, their brilliant consultation ended in the prescription most common in hospitals, of putting me on the most strict regimen.

With money, such orders did not fret me; but yet I had only gold, and changing that might awaken suspicion. However, I determined to try a liberated convict, who acted as infirmary helper; and this fellow, who would do anything for money, soon procured for me what I desired. On my telling

him that I was desirous of getting out into the town for a few hours, he said, that if I disguised myself, it would not be difficult, as the walls were not very high. It was, he said, the way he and his companions got out when they wanted anything. We agreed that he should provide me with clothes, and that he should accompany me in my nocturnal excursion, which was to be a visit to sup with some girls. But the only clothes he could procure for me inside the hospital were much too small, and we were compelled to suspend operations for a time.

Just at this time, one of the sisters of charity passed by my bed, whom I had already watched in performing very mundane duties; not that sister Françoise was one of those dandified nuns who were ridiculed on the stage, before the young nuns were transformed into boarders, and the white handkerchief was replaced by the green apron. Sister Françoise was about thirty-four, a brunette, with a deep color, and her powerful charms created more than one unhappy passion, as well amongst the soldiers as the infirmary overseers. On seeing this seducing creature, who weighed perhaps nearly fifteen stone, the idea occurred to me that I would borrow for a short time her cloister garb. I spoke of it jestingly to my overseer but he took it as if meant seriously, and promised on the ensuing night to get a part of sister Françoise's wardrobe. About two in the morning, I saw him come with a parcel, containing a gown, handkerchief, stockings, &c., which he had carried off from the sister's cell whilst she was at matins. All my bed-room companions, nine in number, were soundly asleep, but I went out to put on my attire. What gave me the most trouble was the head-dress. I had no idea of the mode of arranging it, and yet the appearance of disorder in these garments, always arranged with a scrupulous nicety, would have infallibly betrayed me.

At length sister Vidocq finished her toilet, and we crossed the courts and gardens, and reached a place where the wall could easily be scaled. I then gave the overseer fifty francs, nearly all my store; he lent me a hand, and I was soon in a lonely spot, where I reached the country, guided by my indefinite directions. Although much encumbered with my petticoats, I yet walked so fast as to get on at least two leagues

before sun-rise. A countryman whom I met going to sell his vegetables at Quimper, and whom I questioned as to my road, told me that I was journeying toward Brest. This was not the way for me, and I made the fellow comprehend that I wished to go toward Rennes, and he pointed out to me a cross road leading to the high route to this city, which I immediately took, trembling at every moment, lest I should meet any of the soldiers of the English army, then lying in the villages between Nantes and Brest. About ten in the morning, on reaching a small hamlet, I inquired if there were any soldiers near, evincing much fear, which was real however, lest they should examine me, which would have led to a detection. The person whom I asked was a sacristan, full of chatter and inquisitiveness, who compelled me to enter a curate's house near at head, to take some refreshment.

The curate, an elderly man, whose face betrayed that benevolence so rare among the ecclesiastics who come into towns to blazon forth their pretensions and conceal their immorality, received me very kindly. "My dear sister," said he, "I was about to celebrate mass; as soon as that is over, you shall breakfast with us." I was then compelled to go to church, and it was no trifling embarrassment for me to make the signs and genuflections prescribed to a nun. Fortunately, the curate's old female servant was at my side, and I got through very well by imitating her in every particular. Mass concluded, we sat down to table, and interrogatories commenced. I told the good people that I was going to Rennes to perform penance. The curate asked nothing more; but the sacristan pressing me rather importunately to know why I was thus punished, I told him, "Alas, it was for curiosity!" This closed the little man's mouth. My situation was, however, one of difficulty, I was afraid to eat, lest I should betray too manly an appetite: and again, I more frequently said "M. le cure," than "my dear brother;" so that my blunders would have betrayed all, had I not terminated the breakfast. I found means, however, to learn the names of the villages of the district, and, strengthened by the blessings of the curate, who promised not to forget me in his prayers, I went on my way somewhat more accustomed to my new attire.

I met few people on my way, the wars of the revolution had

depopulated the wretched country, and I traversed the villages whilst the inhabitants were all in bed. Arriving one night at a hamlet, composed of a few houses, I knocked at the door of a farm-house. An old woman came to open it to me, and conducted me to a good-sized parlor. The family consisted of father, mother, a young lad, and two girls, from fifteen to seventeen years of age. When I went in, they were making a kind of cake of buck-wheat flour, and were all around the frying pan. I expressed my desire for some refreshment. Out of respect to my sacred office, they gave me the first cakes, which I devoured without even feeling that they were so burning hot as to scorch my palate. I have often since sat down at sumptuous tables, where I have had abundance of most exquisite wines, and meats of the most delicate and delicious flavor, but I can never forget the cakes of the peasant of Lower Brittany.

On the termination of supper we had prayer, and then the father and mother lighted their pipes. Suffering greatly from agitation and fatigue, I expressed a wish to retire. "We have no bed to give you," said the master of the house, who having been a sailor, spoke very good French: "you shall sleep with my two girls." I observed to him, that going on a vow I must sleep on straw, adding that I should be contented with a corner in the stable. "Oh!" replied he; "in sleeping with Jeanne and Madelon you will not break your vow, for the bed is only made of straw. Besides you cannot be in the stable, for that is already occupied by a tinker and two soldiers, who asked my leave to pass the night there." I could say nothing more; and but too glad to escape the soldiers, I reached the boudoir of the young ladies. It was a loft filled with cider apples, cheese, and smoked bacon: in one corner a dozen fowls were roosting, and lower down were hutched eight rabbits. The furniture consisted of a dilapidated pitcher, worm-eaten joint-stool, and the fragment of a looking-glass; the bed, like all in that country, was only a chest shaped like a coffin, half filled with straw, and scarcely three feet wide.

Here was a fresh embarrassment for me; the two young girls undressed very deliberately before me, who had many and good reasons for seeming very shy. Independently of

circumstances that may be guessed, I had under my female attire a man's shirt, which would betray my sex and my incognito. Not to be detected, I took out a few pins very slowly, and when I saw the two sisters had got into bed I overturned, as if by accident, the iron lamp which lighted us, and then took off my feminine habits without fear. On getting between the sail-cloth sheets, I laid down so as to avoid all unlucky detection.

I was motionless, with my eyes open like a hare in its form, when long before daylight I heard a knocking with the butt-end of a musket against the door. My first idea, like every man in similar circumstances, was that they had traced me, and were coming to apprehend me; but I did not know where to conceal myself. The blows were redoubled: and I then bethought me of the soldiers sleeping in the stable, which dissipated my fears. "Who is there?" said the master of the house, leaping up.—"Your soldiers."—"Well, what do you want?"—"Fire to light our pipes before we set off." Our host then arose, and blowing up the fire left in the ashes, he opened the door to the soldiers. One of these, looking at his watch by the lamp light, said "It is half-past four o'clock. Come, let us go; the rations are in good order. Come, to the march, my lads." They went away, and our host, putting out the lamp, went to bed again. As for me, not wishing to dress myself in presence of my bed-fellows any more than undress myself, I immediately rose, and lighting the lamp, put on my woolen gown, and then going down on my knees in a corner, pretended to pray until the family should awake. I did not remain long in waiting. At five o'clock in the morning the mother cried from her bed, "Jeanne, get up, and get some soup ready for the sister, who wishes to depart early." Jeanne got up, and the butter-milk soup having been made and eaten with good appetite, I left the good persons who had so kindly welcomed me.

Having walked all day without flagging, I found myself at the close of the day in a village near the environs of Vannes, when I remembered I had been deceived by false or mistaken directions. I slept at this village, and the next day I went through Vannes at a very early hour. At the end of eight days' walk, I reached Nantes, and I inquired for the Ile Fey-

deau. When at the Bicêtre, I had learned from a man named Grenier, called the Nantais, that there was in this quarter a kind of auberge, where robbers met without fear of disturbance. I knew that by using a well-known name I should be admitted without difficulty; but I only remembered the address very vaguely, and scarcely knew how and where to find out the place. I adopted an expedient which succeeded. I went into many houses and asked for M. Grenier. At the fourth where I sought for this name, the hostess, leaving two persons with whom she was conversing, took me into a small room and said to me, "Have you seen Grenier? Is he still sick (in prison)?" "No," answered I, "he is well (free);" and perceiving that I was all right with the mother of robbers, I told her unhesitatingly who I was, and how I was situated. Without replying, she took my arm, and opening a door let into the panel, made me enter a low room, where eight men and women were playing at cards and drinking brandy, etc. "Here," said my guide, presenting me to the goodly party, much astonished at the appearance of a nun, "here is a sister come to convert you all." At the same time I tore off my handkerchief, and three of the party, whom I had met at the Bagne, recognized me. They were Berry, Bidaut Mauger and the young Goupy, whom I had met at Quimper. The others were fugitives from the Bagne of Rochefort. They were much amused at my disguise; and when supper had made us all jolly, one of the females put on my nun's habit, and her gestures and attitudes contrasted so strangely with this costume, that we all laughed till we cried, until the moment when we went to bed.

On waking, I found on my bed new clothes, linen, and in fact everything necessary for my toilet. Whence did they come? But this was of no consequence. The little money which I had not expended at the hospital at Quimper, where I paid dearly for everything, had been used on my journey; and without clothes, resources or acquaintances, I was compelled to wait until I could write to my mother; and in the meantime accepted all that was offered me. But one circumstance of a particular nature abridged my stay at the Ile Feydeau. At the end of a week, my companions seeing me perfectly recovered from my fatigues, told me one evening that they intended

on the next day to break into a house on the Place Graslin, and relied on my going with them. I was even to have the post of honor, that of working inside with Mauger.

But I did not intend to do this, and thought how I could make use of the circumstance to get away and go to Paris, where, near my family, my resources would not fail me; but it never entered into my calculations to enroll myself in a band of thieves; for although I had associated with robbers, and lived by my wits, I felt an invincible repugnance to entering on a career of crime, of which early experience had taught me the perils and risks. A refusal would, on the other hand, render me suspected by my new companions, who, in this retreat, secure from sight or hearing, could knock me on the head with impunity, and send me to keep company with the salmon and smelts of the Loire; and I had only one course to take, which was to set out as quickly as possible, and this I resolved on doing.

Having exchanged my new clothes for a countryman's frock and eighteen francs to boot, I left Nantes, carrying at the end of a stick a basket of provisions, which gave me at once the appearance of an inhabitant of the environs.

On quitting Nantes, I walked for a day and two nights without stopping at any village, and my provisions were exhausted; still I went on hap-hazard, although decided on reaching Paris or the sea-shore, hoping to get to sea in some ship, when I reached the first habitation of a town which appeared to have been lately the scene of a combat. The greater part of the houses were nothing but a heap of rubbish, blackened by fire, and all that surrounded the place had been entirely destroyed. Nothing was standing but the church tower, whence the clock was striking the hour for inhabitants who no longer existed. This scene of desolation presented at the same time the most whimsical occurrences. On the only piece of wall which remained belonging to an auberge, were still the words "Good entertainment for man and horse;"—there the soldiers were watering their horses in the holy-water vessels; —farther on, their companions were dancing to the tune of an organ with the countrywomen, who, ruined and wretched, had prostituted themselves to the Blues (republicans) for bread. By the traces of this war of extermination we might have

thought ourselves in the midst of the wilds of America, or the oases of the desert, where barbarous tribes were cutting each other's throats with blind fury. Yet there had only been, on both sides, Frenchmen: but every species of fanaticism made rendezvous there. I was in La Vendée, at Cholet.

The master of a wretched cabaret, thatched with broom, where I halted, gave me my cue, by asking me if I had come to Cholet for the next day's market. I answered in the affirmative, much astonished that one should be held in the midst of these ruins, and even that the farmers of the environs had anything to sell; but my host told me that scarcely anything was brought to this market but cattle from distant districts; on the other hand, although no one had yet done anything to repair the disasters of the war, the amnesty was nearly terminated by General Hoche, and if republican soldiers were still found in the country it was that they might keep down the Chouans (a contraction of the word chat-haunt, a screech-owl; a title given to parties of Vendéeans, and afterward to bands formed for plunder, who ravished the western part of France subsequently to 1793, and were called by this name because, like owls, they came out only at night), who were becoming formidable.

I went to the market early the next day, and thinking to take advantage of it, I accosted a cattle-dealer, whose face was familiar with me, asking him to listen to me for a moment. He looked at me with distrust, taking me probably for a spy, but I hastened to relieve his suspicions, telling him that it was only a personal affair. We then entered a hovel where they sold brandy, and I then told him that having deserted from the 36th demi-brigade to see my parents, who lived in Paris, I was desirous of getting some situation which would allow me to reach my destination without fear of arrest. This good fellow told me that he had no situation to offer me, but that if I would drive a drove of oxen as far as Sceaux, I might go with him. No proposal was ever accepted with more readiness, and I entered on my duty instantly, anxious to show my new master all the return I could testify for his kindness.

VI

I NEVER was so wretched as after my entry at the Bagne at Toulon. Cast at twenty-four years of age amongst the most abandoned wretches, and necessarily in contact with them, although I would have preferred a hundred times to be reduced to living in the midst of people infected with a plague; compelled only to see and hear degraded beings whose minds were incessantly bent on devising evil schemes, I feared the dire contagion of such vicious society. When, day and night, in my presence, they openly practiced the most vile and demoralized actions, I was not so confident in the strength of my own character as not to fear that I might become too much familiarized with such atrocious and dangerous conversation. In fact, I had resisted many dangerous temptations; but want, misery, and the thirst of liberty, will often involuntarily tempt us to a step toward crime. I had never been in any situation where it was more positively incumbent on me to attempt an escape, and henceforward all my ideas and thoughts were turned to the compassing of this measure. Various plans suggested themselves, but that was not sufficient; for to put any of them into execution I must await a favorable opportunity, and until then patience was the only remedy for my woes. Fastened to the same bench with robbers by profession, who had already escaped several times, I was, as well as they, an object of special surveillance, which it was difficult to divert. In their cambrons (watch-boxes), at a short distance from us, the argousins were always on the look-out, and observed our least motions. Father Mathieu, their chief, had the eyes of a lynx, and such a knowledge of the men he had to deal with, that he could tell at the slightest glance if they were scheming to deceive him. This old fox was nearly sixty years of age; but having a vigorous constitution, which seemed proof against the attacks of time, he was still hale and hearty. He was one of those square figures which never wear out. I have him now in my "mind's eye," with his little tail, his gray and powdered locks, and his face in wrinkles so congruous with the business of his calling. He never spoke without mentioning his cudgel; it was a never-ending theme of pleasurable recital to talk of the many bastinadoes he had inflicted personally, or ordered

to be done. Always at war with the convicts, he knew every one of their tricks. His mistrust was so excessive, that he often accused them of plotting when they were not at all thinking of it. It may be supposed that it was no easy matter to make a sop for this Cerberus. I tried, however, to procure his favor—an attempt in which no one had as yet succeeded; but I soon found that I had not essayed in vain, for I perceptibly gained on his good-will. Father Mathieu sometimes talked to me—a sign, as the experienced told me, that I had made some way with him. I thought I might ask something from him on the strength of this, and I asked him to allow me to make children's toys with the pieces of wood brought in by the working convicts. He granted all I asked, provided I was steady; and the next day I began my work. My companions cut out roughly, and I finished the toys. Father Mathieu approved of my productions; and when he saw that I had assistance in my work, he could not forbear testifying his approbation, which he had not expressed for a long time previously. "Well, well!" said he, "how I like people to amuse themselves; it would be well if you all did the same. It would pass time away, and with the profits you might purchase some small comforts." A few days afterward the bench was a perfect workshop, where fourteen men, equally anxious to drive away ennui and earn a little money, worked away with much industry. We had all some goods ready, which were sold by the assistants of the convicts who gave us the materials. For a month our trade was very brisk, and every day we had abundant returns, not a sous of which was reserved. Father Mathieu had authorized us to appoint as our treasurer a convict named Pantaragat, who sold provisions in the room in which we were. Unfortunately there are goods which cannot be multiplied without the necessary balance between produce and consumption being destroyed. Toulon was replete with toys of every description, and we must henceforward sit with folded arms. No longer knowing what to do, I feigned a complaint in my legs, that I might be sent to the hospital. The doctor to whom I was recommended by Father Mathieu, whose protégé I had become, actually believed that I was unable to walk. When one would attempt to escape, it is impossible to manage better than to contrive to excite such an opinion. Doc-

tor Ferrant did not for an instant suspect me of an intent to deceive him. He was one of those disciples of Esculapius who think that bluntness is a part of their profession; but still he was a humane man, and behaved very kindly to me. The chief surgeon had also a liking for me, and to me he trusted the care of his surgery chest. I scraped his lint, rolled his bandages, and made myself generally useful, so that my willingness procured for me his kindness. Every one, even to the argousin of the infirmary, behaved well to me, although no one could exceed in sternness M. l'Homme (that was his name), whom they called, jokingly, "Ecce Homo," because he had been formerly a seller of psalms and canticles. Although I had been pointed out to him as a daring fellow, M. l'Homme was so much pleased with my good behavior, and still more with the bottles of mulled wine which I shared with him, that he perceptibly became more humanized. When I was pretty well assured that I should not excite his suspicions, I unmasked my battery, to overpower his vigilance, as well as that of his fellow-guards. I had already procured a wig and black whiskers, and had besides, concealed in my mattress, an old pair of boots, which, when well waxed, seemed as good as new; but that was only an equipment for my head and feet. To complete my toilet, I relied on the head surgeon, who used to lay on my bed his great-coat, hat, cane and gloves. One morning, whilst he was engaged in amputating an arm, I saw that M. l'Homme had followed him to assist in the operation, which was performed at the extremity of one of the wards. The opportunity for a disguise was admirable, and I hastened to complete it; and in my new costume, I went straight to the door. I had to pass through a crowd of argousins; but I ventured boldly, and none of them appeared to pay any attention to me, and I already thought myself out of danger, when I heard a cry, "Stop him, stop him! a prisoner has escaped!" I was not more than twenty steps from the arsenal, and, without losing my presence of mind, I redoubled my speed, and having got to the door, I said to the guard, pointing to a person who was just entering the city, "Run with me; he has escaped from the hospital."

This would, perhaps, have saved me; but, just as I stepped over the wicket, I was seized by the wig, and on turning round, saw M. l'Homme; resistance would have been certain

death; and I therefore quietly followed him back to the Bagne, where I was put to the double chain. It was evident that I was to undergo punishment, and to avoid it, I cast myself on my knees before the commissary, saying, "Oh, sir, do not let me be beaten; that is the only favor I ask; I would rather undergo three years' additional confinement." The commissary, however touching my petition might have been, could not keep his countenance; but told me, that he would pardon me on account of my boldness and ingenuity, on condition that I would point out the person who had procured me the disguise. "You must be aware," I replied to him, "that the people who guard us are wretches who will do anything for money, but nothing in the world shall induce me to betray those who serve me." Pleased with my frankness, he ordered me to be released from the double chain; and when the argousin murmured at so much indulgence, he desired him to be silent, adding, "You ought to like, rather than be angry with him, for he has just given you a lesson which you would do well to profit by." I thanked the commissary, and the next moment was conducted to the fatal bench to which I was to be fastened for the next six years. I then flattered myself with the hopes of returning to my trade of toy-making, but father Mathieu refusing me, I was compelled, unwillingly, to remain unemployed. Two months elapsed without any change in my circumstances, when, one night, being unable to sleep, there flashed through my brain one of those luminous ideas which only occur in darkness. Jossas was awake, and I mentioned it to him. It may be surmised that he was always intent on effecting his escape, and he thought it admirably wonderful as I had devised it, and begged me not to fail putting it into execution. It will be seen that I did not neglect his advice. One morning, the commissary of the Bagne going his rounds, passed near me, and I begged leave to speak to him in private. "What do you want?" said he. "Have you any complaint to make? Speak, my man, speak out, and I will do you justice." Encouraged by the kindness of this language, I said, "Good sir, you see before you a second example of an honest criminal. You may perhaps remember that on coming here I told you that I was in my brother's place. I do not accuse him; I am even pleased at thinking he was ignorant of the crime imputed

to him; but it was he, who, under my name, was eondemned by the court at Douai; he escaped from the Bagne at Brest, and now, having reaehed England, he is free, and I, the victim of a sad mistake, must submit to punishment. Alas! how fatal to me has been our resemblance!

"Without this circumstance, I should not have been taken to Bicètre; the keeper would not have sworn to my person. In vain havc I begged for an inquiry; it is beeause their testimony has been reeeived, that an identity is allowed whieh does not exist. But the error is consummated, and I have much to bewail! I know that it is not with you to alter a decision from whieh there is no appeal, but it is a favor you may grant to me: to be sure of mc, I am plaeed in a eell with suspeeted men where I am with a herd of robbers, assassins, and hardened ruffians. At every moment I tremble at the recital of crimes which have been committed, as well as at the hopes of those who are plotting others, to bc perpetrated the moment, if it ever arrives, that they shall get free from their fetters. Ah! I beg you, in the name of every sentiment of humanity, to leave me no longer amongst a set of such abandoned miscreants. Put me in a dungeon, load me with chains, do with me whatever you will, but do not leave me any longer with them. If I have endeavored to eseape, it has been only that I might get away from such a sink of infamy. (At this moment I turned toward the convicts.) You may see, sir, how ferociously they gaze at me; they already prepare to make me repent of what I am saying to you; they pant, they burn, to bathe their hands in my blood; once more I conjure you, do not give me up to the vengeanee of these atrocious monsters."

During this discourse, the convicts were petrified with astonishment; they could not conceive that one of their comrades would thus upbraid them in their very teeth; the commissary himself did not know what to think of such a step; he was silent, and I saw that I had touched him deeply. Then throwing myself at his feet, with tears in my eyes, I added, "Pity me; if you refuse me, if you go without removing me from this room you shall never see me again." These words produced the desired effect. The commissary, who was a worthy man, had me unloosed in his presence, and gave orders that I should be placed with the working convicts. I was yoked with

a man named Salesse, a Gascon, as knavish as a convict may be. The first time we were alone, he asked me if I intended to escape. "I have no thoughts of it," replied I, "I am but too glad that they allow me to work." But Jossas possessed my secret, and he arranged all for my escape. I had a plain dress which I concealed under my galley clothes without the knowledge even of my yoke-fellow. A moving screw had supplied the place of the rivet in my fetters, and I was ready to start. The third day after leaving my companions I went out to labor, and presented myself before the argousin; "Get along, good-for-nought," said father Mathieu, "it is not time." I was in the rope-room, and the place appeared propitious. I told my companion that I had a call of nature, and he pointed out some pieces of wood behind which I could go, and he was scarcely out of sight, when throwing off my red shirt, and taking out the screw, I ran toward the basin. The frigate la Meuron was then under repair, which had brought Buonaparte and his suite from Egypt. I went on board and asked for the master-carpenter, whom I knew to be in the hospital. The cook, whom I accosted, took me for one of the new crew. I was rejoiced at this, and to confirm the idea, as I knew him to be a man of Auvergne, by his accent, I began conversing with him in his own provincial dialect, and in a tone of much assurance, although I was on thorns the whole time; for forty couples of convicts were at work close to us. They might recognize me in a moment. A cargo soon set off for the town, and I jumped into the boat, when, seizing an oar, I rowed away like an old sailor, and we soon reached Toulon. Anxious to reach the country I went to the Italian gate, but no one was allowed to go out without a green card given by the magistrates, and I was refused egress, and whilst I was thinking how I could get out, I heard the three reports of the cannon which announced my escape. At this moment a tremor pervaded all my limbs; already did I see myself in the power of the argousins, and all the police of the Bagne. I pictured myself in presence of the excellent commissary, whom I had so basely deceived. If I were taken, I must be lost. These sad reflections coming over me, I walked away in haste, and that I might avoid a crowd, betook myself to the ramparts.

On reaching a solitary spot, I walked very slowly like a man who, not knowing whither to bend his steps, is full of consideration, when a female accosted me, and asked me in provincial French what the hour was; I told her that I did not know; and she then began to talk of the weather, and concluded by asking me to accompany her home; it is only a few yards hence, she added, and no one will see us. The opportunity of finding a place of refuge was too propitious to be refused, and I followed my conductress to a sort of small inn, when I sent for some refreshment. Whilst we were conversing together, three other cannon shots were heard. "Ah," cried the girl, with an air of satisfaction, "there is a second escape to-day." "What!" said I, "my lass, does that please you? Should not you like to get the reward?" "I! why you cannot know much of me." "Bah, bah," I replied, "fifty francs are always worth earning, and I swear to you that if one of these fellows fall into my clutches——" "You are a wretch!" she said, making a gesture of indignation. "I am only a poor girl, but Celestine would never eat the bread earned by means so despicable." At these words, pronounced with an accent of truth which left no doubt on my mind of her sincerity, I did not hesitate to confide my secret to her. As soon as I had informed her that I was a convict, I cannot express how much she appeared interested in my fate. "Mon Dieu!" she said, "they are so much to be pitied; I would save them all, and have already saved many;" then, after pausing for an instant, as if to consider. "Let me manage it," she then added; "I have a lover who has a green card, I will borrow it from him, and you shall use it, and, once out of the city, you can deposit it under a stone which I will point out to you, and in the interim, as we are not in security here, I will take you to my apartments." On reaching this, she told me that she must leave me for a moment. "I must tell my lover," she said, "and will speedily return." Women are sometimes most admirable actresses, and, in spite of her kind protestations, I feared some treachery. Perhaps Celestine was going to denounce me; she had not reached the street, when I ran down the staircase. "Well, well," cried the girl, "do you fear? If you mistrust me, come along with me." I thought it most prudent to watch her, and we walked away

together, whither I knew not. Scarcely had we gone ten yards, when we met a funeral procession. "Follow the burial," said my protectress, "and you will escape;" and before I had time to thank her, she disappeared. The followers were numerous, and I mixed amongst the crowd of assistants, and, that I might not be thought a stranger at the ceremony, I entered into conversation with an old sailor, from whose communications I soon learned how to utter a few well-timed remarks on the virtues of the defunct. I was convinced that Celestine had not betrayed me. When I left the ramparts behind me, which it had been of such paramount importance for me to pass, I almost wept for joy; but that I might not betray myself, I still kept up a strain of suitable lamentations.

On reaching the cemetery I advanced in my turn to the edge of the grave, and after having cast a handful of earth on the coffin, I separated from the company by taking a circuitous path. I walked on for many hours without losing sight of Toulon, and about five o'clock in the evening, just as I was entering a grove of firs, I saw a man armed with a gun. As he was well clad, and had a game-bag, my first thought was that he was a huntsman; but observing the butt of a pistol projecting from his girdle, I feared that I had met with one of those Provençals, who, at the sound of the cannon, always scour the country in search of the runaway galley-slaves. If my fears were just, flight was unavailing; and it was, perhaps, best to advance rather than retreat. This I did, and on approaching him sufficiently close to be on my guard in case he should show any hostilities, I asked him the road to Aix.

"Do you want the high-road or the by-way?" said he, with peculiar emphasis.

"Oh, either, no matter which," I answered; hoping by my indifference to remove his suspicions.

"In that case, follow this path, it leads to the station of the gendarmes; and if you do not like traveling alone, you can avail yourself of the escort."

At the word "gendarmes" I turned pale, and the stranger, perceiving the effect his words had produced, added, "Come, come; I see you are not over anxious to travel on the highway. Well, if you are not in a very great hurry, I will con-

duct you to the village of Pourières, which is not two leagues from Aix."

He seemed so well acquainted with the localities, that I availed myself of this offer, and consented to follow him. Then, without stirring, he pointed out a clump of bushes, where he bid me await his joining me. Two hours passed before he finished his guard, and he then came to me.—"Get up," said he. I obeyed, and when I thought myself in the thickest of the wood, I found myself at the borders of it, about fifty paces from a house, in front of which were seated several gendarmes. At the sight of their uniforms, I started. "What ails you, man?" asked my guide; "do you think I would betray you? If you fear anything, take these and defend yourself;" at the same time offering me his pistols, which I refused. "Well, well!" he added, and squeezed my hand, to testify how much he was satisfied with my confidence.

Concealed by the bushes which skirted our path, we stopped. I could not comprehend the motive of a halt so near the enemy. Our stay was protracted till nightfall when we saw approaching from Toulon a mail, escorted by four gendarmes who were relieved by the same number from the brigade whose vicinity had so much alarmed me. The mail proceeded on its journey, and was soon out of sight. My companion then taking my arm, said in an under-tone, "Let us start, nothing can be done to-day."

We then walked away in an opposite direction for about an hour, and my guide going up to a tree, clasped the trunk in his hands, and I saw that he was counting the number of notches cut by a knife—"Good, good!" he ejaculated with an air of satisfaction, which was to me inexplicable, and taking from his game-bag a piece of bread which he divided with me, he then gave me a bottle, whence I drank with pleasure. The collation could not have been more opportune, for I was in want of something to recruit my strength. In spite of the darkness, we walked so fast that I was tired, and my feet, long unused to exercise, had become so painful that I was going to declare it impossible for me to proceed further, when a village clock struck three. "Gently," said my guide, stooping and placing his ear on the ground; "do as I do, and listen; with this cursed Polish legion one must be always on the

watch. Did you hear nothing?'' I replied that I thought I heard the footsteps of a body of men. ''Yes,'' he added, ''it is they; stir not on your life, or we shall be taken.'' He had scareely spoken, when a patrol guard eame toward the thicket in whieh we were coneealed. ''Did you see anything, you fellows?'' said some one in a low tone.—''Nothing, sergeant.''

''Parbleu! I thought so; it is as dark as an oven. This devil of a Roman, whom heaven's thunders erush! To make us travel all night like wolves in a wood! Ah, if ever I find him, or any of his gang!''

''Qui vive? (who goes there?)'' cried a soldier, suddenly.

''What do you see?'' said the sergeant.—''Nothing; but I heard a breathing on this side,'' and he indicated the spot where we were.

''Stuff! you are dreaming. You are so mueh alarmed about Roman, that you think that you always have him in your cartridge-box.''

Two other soldiers asserted that they had heard the same.

''Hold your tongues,'' replied the sergeant. ''I see there is nobody, and we must once more, aceording to eustom, return to Pourières without having trapped our game. Come, my lads, it is time to be off.'' The patrol seemed disposed to retreat. ''It is a *ruse de guerre,*'' said my companion. ''I know they will beat the wood and return upon us in a semi-circle.''

It was now neeessary that I should be firm and composed. ''Are you fearful?'' said my guide.

''This is no time for fear,'' I replied.

''Well then, follow me; here are my pistols; when I fire, do you the same, so that the four shots only sound like one report. Now, fire.''

The four shots were fired, and we then ran with all speed, without being pursued. The fear of falling into an ambuseade had made the soldiers come to a halt, but we did not pause from our flight. On getting near an isolated hut, the stranger said to me, ''It is now daylight, and we are safe:'' and then leaping the pales of the garden, he took a key from the hollow trunk of a tree, and opening the door of the cot we immediately entered.

"That is all very good," said my host. "I see who you are: but do you know who I am?"

"I' faith, to tell the honest truth, I first took you for a patrol; afterward I took you for a leader of smugglers—and now I do not know what to think."

"You shall know, then. In our country we are brave enough, you see, but object to be made soldiers on compulsion —so we did not comply with the requisition when we could do anything to avoid it. The quota selected in Pourières even refused to march at all when called upon. The gendarmes came to compel the refractory, and they resisted. Men were killed on both sides: and all the townsmen who participated in the affray betook themselves to the woods to escape a court-martial. We thus met, sixty in number, under the orders of M. Roman and the brothers Bisson de Tretz: if you like to remain with us I shall be glad, for last night's experience tells me that you are a man of mold, and I advise you not to be in any fear about gendarmes. Besides, we want for nothing, and run but little risk. The country people inform us of all that passes, and give us provisions. Come, will you join us?"

I did not judge it wise to reject the proposition: and, without reflecting on the consequences, I answered as he wished. I stayed two days at the hut, and on the third set out with my companion, armed with a carbine and two pistols. After many hours' walking over mountains covered with wood, we reached a hut larger than that we had quitted: it was the headquarters of Roman. I waited a moment at the door for my guide to announce me. He soon returned, and introduced me to a large apartment, where I saw about forty persons, the greater number of whom were grouped about a man who, by his appearance, half-rustic, half-citizen, might have passed for a rich country proprietor. I was presented to this personage, who said to me, "I am delighted to see you: I have heard of your coolness, and know your worth. If you will share our perils, you shall find friendship and freedom: we do not know you, but you have a face which would command friends everywhere. To sum up all, our men are honorable and brave—for probity and honor are our mottoes." After this discourse, which could only be addressed to me by Roman, the brothers Bisson, and then all the troop, gave me the embrace of brotherhood.

Such was my reception in this society, to which its leader attributed a political intent; but it is certain, that after beginning, like the Chouans, to stop the diligences which conveyed the state moneys, Roman had begun to plunder travelers. The mutineers who composed his band had at first much reluctance in committing these robberies; but habits of an unsettled life, idleness, and especially the difficulty of returning to their homes, soon removed all scruples.

The day after my arrival, Roman appointed me to conduct six men to the environs of Saint Maximin. I did not know the purport of the mission. About midnight, on reaching the borders of a small thicket that skirted the road, we ensconced ourselves in a ravine. Roman's lieutenant, Bisson de Tretz, recommended absolute silence. The wheels of a carriage were soon heard, and it passed us. Bisson looked out cautiously, and said, "It is the Nice diligence: that will not do for us: it has more soldiers than ducats." He then ordered us to retreat, and we regained the hut: when Roman, enraged at seeing us return empty-handed, swore loudly, exclaiming, "Well, well! they shall pay for this to-morrow."

It was no longer possible for me to deceive myself as to the association to which I belonged: I had decidedly fallen in with that famous band of highwaymen who were spreading terror throughout Provence. If I fell into the hands of justice—a fugitive galley-slave—I could hardly hope for that pardon which might be granted even to the troop with which I was mingled. Reflecting on all the difficulties of my situation, I was tempted to escape them by flight; but, so recently enrolled, how was it possible to evade the strict scrutiny with which they regarded me? On the other hand, to express any desire of withdrawing myself from the confederacy, would only have provoked a suspicion fatal to my purpose or safety. Might I not be considered as a spy, and be shot as such? Death and infamy threatened me whichever way I turned. In the midst of these perplexities to which I was a prey, my only idea was to sound the man who had first effected my introduction amongst my comrades; and, with as much apparent indifference as I could assume, I inquired if it would not be possible to obtain from our captain leave of absence for a few days? The man looked at me with an air of cunning and

suspicion: "Yes, friend," said he, "such favors are sometimes obtained, when our chief knows well the person to whom he grants them."

I had now been upward of eleven days with these bandits, each day more fully resolved to withdraw myself from the honor of their exploits, when one night that I had fallen asleep through excessive fatigue, I was suddenly aroused by an extraordinary noise; I listened, and discovered that the confusion which had broken my rest was occasioned by one of the troops having been robbed of a purse heavy with many years' booty: to my consternation I found that, as being the last comer amongst them, their suspicions were directed to me. They surrounded me and formally accused me of having stolen the purse; the cry was unanimously against me, and drowned my protestations of innocence; they insisted upon searching my person. I had lain down in my clothes, which a hundred hands were ready to strip off me. What were their surprise, anger, and astonishment, at perceiving on my shoulder the brand of a galley-slave! "A galley-slave!" exclaimed the captain. "A galley-slave amongst us! He can only be here as a spy; knock him on the head, or shoot him, that will be soonest done." I heard the click of the muskets preparing to obey this last order. "One moment," exclaimed the chief; "let him, before he dies, make restitution of the lost money." "Yes," said I to him, "the money shall be restored, but on condition that you grant me a few minutes' private conversation." He consented to listen to what I had to say, under the idea that now I should make a full confession; but the moment I found myself alone with him, I protested anew that I was entirely innocent of the affair, and suggested an expedient for discovering the culprit, the idea of which was drawn from a work I had read of Berquin's. My plan was acceded to, and the captain returned to his men, holding as many straws in his hand as there were individuals present. "Observe me well," said he to them; "the longest of these straws will fall into the hands of him who is guilty."

The drawing began, each man in silence plucked out a straw; but when it had concluded, the straws were returned to the captain, and his troop looked with curious eagerness for the result.

One alone was found shorter than the others. A man named Joseph d'Osiolles presented it. "You are then the thief!" exclaimed the captain. "Every straw was of the same length. You have shortened yours, and thus criminated yourself." Joseph was searched, and the stolen purse found hid in his belt.

My justification was complete; the whole troop acknowledged my innocence; and the captain, whilst he sought to excuse the violence to which I had been subjected, added, that I must no longer form part of his band. "It is a sad piece of ill luck for you," said he; "but you must feel that, having been at the galleys——" He did not complete the sentence, but, putting fifteen louis in my hands, he compelled me to promise silence as to all I had seen or heard for the next twenty-five days. I was prudent, and faithful to my engagement.

VII

After the dangers I had undergone whilst remaining with Roman and his band, some idea may be formed of the joy which I experienced on quitting them. It was evident that the government, once determinately settled, would adopt the most efficacious measures for insuring the safety of the interior. The remains of the bands, which, under the name of "Chevaliers du Soleil, or the Compagnie de Jésus," owed their formation to a political reaction, deferred indefinitely, could not fail to be destroyed as soon as was desired. The only honest excuse for their brigandage—royalism—no longer existed; and although Hiver, Leprêtre, Boulanger, Bastide, Jansein, and other "sons of the family," made a boast of attacking the couriers, because they found their profit in it, it began to be no longer in good taste to think that it was quite correct to appropriate to oneself the money of the state. All the *incroyablés* who had thought it a service to check, pistol in hand, the circulation of dispatches and the collection of the imposts, withdrew now to their firesides; and those who had profited by their exertions, or wished for other reasons to be forgotten, betook themselves to a distance from the scene of their exploits. In fact, order was reëstablished, and the time was at hand when robbers, whatever might be

their pretext or motive, were no longer to be tolerated. In haste to get at a considerable distance, I took the road to Lyons, avoiding the highways, until I reached the environs of Orange; there I fell in with some Provençal wagoners, whose packages soon revealed to me that they were about to take the same road as myself. I entered into conversation with them; and as they appeared to me to be hearty, jovial fellows, I did not hesitate to tell them that I was a deserter, and that they would serve me materially if, to aid me in avoiding the vigilance of the gendarmes, they would agree to bestow their patronage on me. This proposal did not surprise them, and it even seemed as if they had suspected that I should claim their protection and secrecy. At this period, and particularly in the south, it was not rare to meet with fine fellows, who had left their colors, and committed themselves to the care of Heaven. It was then very natural to take my word, and the wagoners received me kindly; and some money which I displayed, as if by chance, completed the interest which I had already excited. It was agreed that I should pass for the son of the person who had these conveyances in charge. I was accordingly clothed with a smock-frock, and was supposed to be making my first journey. I was decorated with ribbons and nosegays, emblems which at each public-house procured for me the congratulations of all the inmates.

I filled my part very well; but the donations necessary to support it adequately made such inroads on my purse, that, on reaching the guillotiere, where I was to leave my party, I had only twenty-eight sous left. Having wandered about for some time in the dirty and dark streets of the second city in France, I remarked, in the Rue des Quatre-Chapeaux, a sort of tavern where I thought that I might procure a supper commensurate with my finances. I was not mistaken; the supper was light enough, and soon dispatched. To remain hungry is indeed a disagreeable thing; and not to know where to find shelter for one's head is equally annoying. When I had wiped my knife, which, however, had not been much engaged, I was reflecting that I must pass the night under the canopy of heaven, when at a table near to mine, I heard a conversation in that bastard German so much spoken in some districts of the Netherlands, and with which I was well ac-

quainted. The speakers were a man and woman about to retire, and whom I found to be Jews. Informed that at Lyons, as in many other towns, these people kept furnished houses, in which they received smugglers, I asked if they could direct me to a public house. I could not have addressed myself to better persons; for they were lodging-keepers, and offered to become my hosts, which, on agreeing to, I accompanied them. Six beds were in the room in which I was placed, none of which were occupied, although it was ten o'clock, and I fell asleep under the idea that I should have no companions in my room.

On awaking, I heard the following conversation in a slang language which was familiar to me.

"It is half-past six," said a voice, which was not unknown to me, "and you lie snoring still."

"Well, and what then? We wanted to break open the old goldsmith's shop last night, but he was on his guard, and we ought to have given him a few inches of cold steel, and then the blood would have flowed."

"Holloa!" said a third person; "do not wag your tongues so fast; there is a man in bed who may be listening."

The advice was too late, but it silenced them, and I half-opened my eyes to see the faces of my companions; but my bed being very low, I could not perceive them. I remained quiet, that they might suppose me asleep; when one of the speakers having arisen, I recognized him as an escaped prisoner from Toulon, named Neveu, who had left some days before me. His comrade jumped out of bed, and him I knew to be Cadet-Paul, another fugitive; a third, and then a fourth arose, and I knew them all then to be galley-slaves.

I almost fancied myself in my room, No. 3. At length I got up from my bed, and scarcely had I put foot on the floor, when they all exclaimed, " 'Tis Vidocq!" They surrounded and congratulated me. One of the robbers, Charles Deschamps, who had escaped a few days after me, told me, that the whole Bagne were full of admiration at my boldness and success. Nine o'clock having struck, they conducted me to breakfast, where we joined the brothers Quinet, etc. They overwhelmed me with kindness, procured me money, clothes, and even a mistress.

I was here situated precisely as I had been at Nantes, but I was not more desirous of following the profession of my friends than I had been in Bretagne; but until I had a remittance from my mother I must live somehow. I thought I might manage to support myself for a time without labor. I proposed most determinately only to receive subsistence from the robbers; but man proposes and God disposes. The fugitives, discontented that I, under various pretexts, always avoided joining their daily plundering parties, at once denounced me, to get rid of a troublesome witness, who might become dangerous. They imagined that I should escape, as a matter of course, and relied, that once known by the police, and having no refuge but with their band, I should then unite myself to their party. In this circumstance, as in all others of a similar kind, in which I have been found, if they were so desirous of my companionship, it was because they had a high opinion of my penetration, my adroitness, and particularly of my strength,—a valuable quality in a profession in which profit is too often attained by peril.

Arrested at Adele Buffin's, in the passage Saint Come, I was taken to the prison of Roanne, where I learned from my examination that I had been sold. In the rage which the discovery threw me into, I took a sudden step, which was, in a measure, my introduction to a career entirely new to me. I wrote to M. Dubois, commissary-general of the police, requesting a private interview, and the same evening I was conducted to his private closet. Having explained my situation to him, I offered to put him in the way of seizing the brothers Quinet, then pursued for having assassinated the wife of a mason. I proposed, besides, to point out the means of apprehending all the persons lodging as well at the Jew's as at Caffin's, the joiner's. In return, I only asked for liberty to quit Lyons. M. Dubois had, doubtless, been before the dupe of such proposals, and I saw that he hesitated to trust me. "You doubt my word," said I to him. "Should you still suspect me if I should escape on my way back to prison, and return and surrender myself as your prisoner?" "No," he replied. "Well, then, you shall soon see me again, provided that you consent not to give my guards any additional orders for my security." He agreed, and I went away; but on arriving at the corner

of the street, I knocked down the two tipstaffs, who had each an arm of mine, and regained the Hôtel de Ville with all possible speed, where I found M. Dubois, who was greatly surprised at my prompt reappearance; but certain from that that he might rely on me, I was allowed to go at liberty.

The next day I saw the Jew, whose name was Vidal, who directed me to a house where, he said, my friends had gone to live, and thither I went. They knew of my escape; but as they had no idea of my understanding with the commissary-general of police, and did not think that I knew who had directed the blow which struck me, they gave me a very cordial reception. During the conversation, I gathered details from the brothers Quinet, which I transmitted to M. Dubois the same evening, and who, convinced of my sincerity, reported my conduct to M. Ganier, secretary-general of the police. I gave this gentleman all necessary information, and must say that he acted his part with much tact and activity.

Two days before they commenced operations, as I had advised, on Vidal's house, I thought it expedient that I should be again arrested. I was again conducted to the prison of Roanne, where the next day Vidal, Coffin, and many others, whom they had caught in the same snare, were brought in. I was at first kept from communicating with them, because I had thought it best that I should be put "au secret." When I was released from it, at the end of several days, to join the other prisoners, I pretended much surprise at finding all the party there. None appeared to have the least idea of the part which I had played. Neveu alone regarded me with distrust, and on my demanding the cause, he said that by the way in which they had been pursued and interrogated, he could not help suspecting that I was the denouncer. I feigned much indignation; and fearing that this opinion might be disseminated, I assembled the prisoners, and informing them of Neveu's suspicions, I demanded if they thought me capable of selling my comrades? and on their answering in the negative, Neveu was compelled to apologize to me. It was important to me that these suspicions should be thus destroyed, for I knew that certain death would be my doom if they had been con-

firmed. There had been many instances at Roanne of this distributive justice, which the prisoners exercised toward one another. One named Moissel, suspected of having given information relative to a robbery of church plate, had been knocked on the head in the court without the assassin being detected. More recently, another individual, accused of a similar indiscretion, had been found one morning hung with a straw band at the bars of his window, and the perpetrator was never discovered.

In the meantime, M. Dubois sent for me to his closet, where, to avoid suspicion, the other prisoners were conducted with me, as if about to undergo an examination. I entered first, and the commissary-general told me that many very expert robbers had arrived at Lyons from Paris, and the more dangerous, as, being supplied with regular credentials, they might wait in safety for the opportunity of making some decided stroke, and then immediately go away. The names by which they were mentioned were then entirely new to me, and I told M. Dubois so, adding that possibly they might be false. He wished to release me immediately, that by seeing these individuals in some public place, I might assure myself whether I had ever seen them before; but I observed to him, that so abrupt a liberation would certainly compromise me with the prisoners, in case that the good of the service should require me again to be entered as prisoner on the jailer's books. The reflection appeared just; but it was agreed that they should devise a means of sending me away the next day without incurring suspicion.

Neveu, who was amongst the prisoners, was also examined after me in the commissary's closet. After some minutes he came out in a rage, and I asked him what had happened.

"What do you think?" said he, "the old covey wanted me to turn nose on the cracksmen who have just arrived. If they find no one to blow them but me, they are all right."

"Why, I did not think you such a flat," said I, the idea flashing on my mind that I might turn this to advantage; "I have promised to blow the gang, and insure them a lodging in the stone jug."

"What! you turned nose? Besides, you are not fly to the gang."

"What matters that? I shall get out of quod, and show them my heels, whilst you are still clinking the darbies."

Neveu appeared struck with the idea, and expressed much regret for having refused the offers of the commissary-general; and as I could not get rid of him, I begged him to return to M. Dubois and recall his refusal. He agreed; and as I had arranged, we were one evening conducted to the great theater; thence to the Celestins, where Neveu pointed out to me all the men. We then retired, escorted by the police agents, who kept close upon us. For the success of my plan, and to avoid suspicion, it was expedient to make the attempt to escape, which would at least confirm the hope which I had given to my companion, and I told him of my intention. On passing Rue Merciere, we entered abruptly into a passage, and closed the door; and whilst the officers ran to the other end, we went out quietly by the way we had entered. When they returned, ashamed of their stupidity, we were already at a considerable distance.

Two days afterward, Neveu, who was no longer wanted, and could not suspect me, was again arrested. I, knowing then the robbers whom we wanted, pointed them out to the police-officers in a church, where they had one Sunday assembled, in the hope of making a good booty on the termination of the prayers. Being no longer useful to the authorities, I then quitted Lyons to go to Paris, where, thanks to M. Dubois, I was sure of arriving in safety.

VIII

I BEGAN to grow wearied of escapes and the sort of liberty they procured for me; I did not wish to return to the Bagne; but I preferred a residence at Toulon to that in Paris, if I were compelled to submit to such creatures as my Paris comrades of crime. I was in this mood in the midst of a considerable number of these supporters of the galleys, whom I had had but too many opportunities of knowing, when several of them proposed that I should help them in trying for a run through the court of the Bons Pauvres. At any other time the project would have made me smile. I did not decline it; but I studied it like a man who considered localities, and so as to preserve for myself that preponderance which

my real successes procured for me, and those which were attributed to me—I might say those which I attributed to myself; for as soon as we live amongst rogues, there is always an advantage in passing for the most wicked and the most clever; and such was my well-established reputation, wherever there were four prisoners at least three had heard of me;—not at all an extraordinary thing, for there were galley-slaves who assumed my name. I was the general to whom all the deeds of his soldiers is attributed; they did not cite the places I had taken by assault, but there was no jailer whose vigilance I could not escape, no irons that I could not break through, no wall that I could not penetrate. I was no less famed for courage and skill, and it was the general opinion that I was capable of any deed of renown in case of need. At Brest, at Toulon, at Rochefort, in fact everywhere, I was considered amongst robbers as the most cunning and most bold. The most villainous sought my friendship, because they thought there was still something to be learned from me, and the greatest novices collected my very words as instructions from which they could gather profit. At Bicêtre, I had a complete court, and they pressed around me, surrounded me, and made tenders of services and kind offers, and expressed regards of which it would be difficult to form an idea. But now, this prison glory was hateful to me: the more I read the souls of malefactors, the more they laid themselves open to me, the more I pitied society for having nourished in its bosom such offspring. I no longer felt that sentiment of the community of misfortune which had formerly inspired my breast; cruel experience and a riper age had convinced me of the necessity of withdrawing myself from these brigands, whose society I loathed, and whose language was an abomination to me. Decided, at any event, to take part against them for the interest of honest men, I wrote to M. Henry to offer my services afresh, without any other condition than that of not being taken back to the Bagne, resigning myself to finish the duration of my sentence in any prison that might be selected.

My letter pointed out so fully the information I could supply, that M. Henry was struck with it: only one consideration balanced with him; it was the example of many accused or

condemned persons, who, having engaged to guide the police in its searches, had only given but trifling information or had even finished themselves by being detected in criminal deeds. To this powerful argument, I opposed the cause of my condemnation, the regularity of my conduct after my escapes, the constancy of my endeavors to procure an honorable existence, and finally I produced my correspondence, my books, my punctuality and credit, and I called for the testimony of all persons with whom I had transacted business, and particularly of my creditors, who had all the greatest confidence in me.

These facts and documents militated strongly in my favor. M. Henry submitted my proposal to the prefect of the police M. Pasquier, who decided on granting it. After a residence of two months at Bicêtre, I was removed to the Force; and, to avoid suspicion, it was stated amongst the prisoners, that I was kept back in consequence of being implicated in a very bad affair, which was to be inquired into. This precaution joined to my renown, put me entirely in good odor. Not a prisoner dared to breathe a doubt of the gravity of the charge against me. Since I had shown so much boldness and perseverance to escape from a sentence of eight years in irons, I must of necessity have a conscience charged with some great crime, capable, if I should be discovered as the author, of sending me to the scaffold. It was then whispered and at last stated openly at La Force, in speaking of me, "He is a cut-throat!" And as, in the place where I was confined, an assassin inspires great confidence, I took care not to refute an error so useful to my plans. I was then far from seeing that an imposture, which I allowed freely to be charged upon me, would be thence perpetuated; and that one day, in publishing my Memoirs, it would be necessary to state that I had never committed murder.

The engagement I had entered into was not so easily fulfilled as may be supposed. A multitude of robbers were then preying on the capital, and it was impossible to furnish the slightest indication of the principal of them; it was only on my ancient renown that I could rely for obtaining any information of the staff of these Bedouins of our civilization; it availed me, I will not say beyond, but equal to what I could desire.

At this period there was in Paris a band of fugitive galley-slaves, who daily perpetrated robberies, without any hope being entertained of putting a termination to their plunderings. Many of them had been apprehended, and acquitted for want of evidence; obstinately intrenched in absence of witnesses, they had long braved the attempts of justice, which could neither oppose to them the testimony of the commission of crime, nor proofs of guilt. To surprise them properly, it would have been necessary to know their domicile; and they were so well concealed that discovery seemed impossible. Among them was one named France (called Tormel), who on coming to La Force, had nothing more urgent than to ask me for ten francs to pay his footing, and I was not inclined to refuse his demand. He soon came to join me, and feeling obliged to me, did not hesitate to give me his confidence. At the time of his arrest he had concealed two notes of a thousand francs from the police, which he gave me, begging me to advance him money, from time to time, as he needed it. "You do not know me," said he, "but these bills speak for me; I trust them to you because I know they are better in your hands than in mine: some time or other we will change them, which now would be difficult, and we must wait." I agreed with France as he wished; I promised to be his banker, as I risked nothing.

Apprehended for violent burglary at an umbrella shop in the passage Feydeau, France had been often interrogated, and constantly declared that he had no residence. However, the police had learned that he had an abode; and it was the more interesting to learn it, as it would lead to the discovery of instruments of robbery, as well as a great quantity of stolen goods. It was a detection of the highest importance, since it would adduce most material proofs. M. Henry told me that he relied on me for obtaining this information; I maneuvered accordingly, and soon learned that at the time of his arrest, France was at the corner of the Rue Montmartin and the Rue Notre Dame des Victoires, in an apartment let by a female receiver of stolen goods, named Josephine Bertrand.

These proofs were positive, but it was difficult to make use of the information without betraying my share in the business

to France, who, having only confessed to me, could only suspect me of betraying him. I, however, succeeded; and so little did he suspect that I had abused his confidence, that he told me all his troubles, in proportion as the plan which I had concerted with M. Henry progressed. Besides, the police were so arranged, that they seemed only to be guided by chance, and thus were the arrangements made.

They gained over to their interest one of the lodgers of the house which France had inhabited; and this lodger told the landlord, that, for about three weeks, no movement was seen in the apartment of Madame Bertrand; and this awakened and afforded a wide field for conjecture. It was remembered that a person went frequently in and out of this apartment; his absence was talked of, and it was a matter of astonishment that he was not seen: the word disappearance was mentioned, and thence the necessity of the intervention of the commissary; then the opening of the door in presence of witnesses; then the discovery of a great quantity of stolen property belonging to the neighborhood, and many of the instruments made use of to consummate these robberies. The next inquiry was, what had become of Josephine Bertrand? and all the persons were visited to whom she had referred when she hired the apartments, but nothing could be learned of this woman; only that a girl, named Lambert, who had succeeded her in the apartment of the Rue Montmartre, had just been apprehended; and as this girl was known as France's mistress, it was conjectured that these two had a common residence. France was in consequence conducted to the spot, and recognized by the neighbors. He pretended that he had been taken by surprise, and that they were mistaken, but the jury before whom he was taken decided otherwise, and he was condemned to the galleys for eight years.

France once convicted, it was easy to follow up the traces of his comrades, two of whom were named Fossard and Legagneur. They were watched, but the negligence and want of address in the officers enabled them to escape the pursuit which I directed. The former was a man the more dangerous, as he was very skillful in making false keys. For fifteen months he seemed to defy the police, when one day I learned that he resided with a hair-dresser in the Rue du Temple, fac-

ing the common sewer. To apprehend him from home was almost impossible, for he was skillful in disguises, and could deteet an officer a hundred paces off; on the other hand, it would be better to seize him in the midst of his professional apparatus, and the produce of his robberies. But the undertaking presented obstacles: Fossard never answered when they knocked at his door, and it was most likely that he had a means of egress, and facilities for getting over the roofs. It appeared to me, that the only mode of seizing him was, to profit by his absence and hide in his lodging. M. Henry was of my opinion; and the door being broken open in the presence of a commissary, three agents placed themselves in a eloset adjoining a recess. Nearly seventy-two hours elapsed, and nobody arrived; at the end of the third day, the officers having exhausted their provisions, were going away, when they heard a key turn in the lock, and Fossard entered. Immediately two of the officers, in eonformity with their instructions, darted from the closet and threw themselves upon him; but Fossard, arming himself with a knife which they had left on the table, frightened them so, that they themselves opened the door which their comrade had closed; and, having turned the key upon them, Fossard quickly descended the staircase, leaving the three agents all the leisure necessary for drawing up a report, in which nothing was wanting, except the circumstance of the knife, which they were very cautious in mentioning.

Before being sent to the Conciergerie, France, who had never ceased to think me stanch, recommended one of his friends to me, named Legagneur, a fugitive galley-slave, arrested in the Rue de la Mortellerie, at the moment when he was executing a robbery by the aid of false keys; and this man, deprived of all resource in consequence of the departure of his comrade, was thinking of sending for the money which he had deposited with a receiver of stolen goods in the Rue St. Dominique, at the Gros-Caillou. Annette, who came constantly to see me at La Force, and sometimes ably abetted me in my pursuits, was charged with the commission; but either from distrust, or a desire to retain it for himself, the receiver received the messenger very ungraciously; and as she insisted, he threatened her with an arrest. Annette returned to tell us

that she had failed in her errand. At this information Legagneur would have denounced the receiver, but that was only the first impulse of anger. Growing more calm, he judged it most fitting to defer his vengeance; and, moreover, to make it turn to his profit. "If I denounce him," said he to me, "not only shall I get nothing by it, but he may contrive to appear not at all in fault. It will be best to wait until I get out, and then I will make him squeak." Legagneur, having no further hope from his receiver, determined to write to two accomplices, Marguerit and Victor Desbois, renowned robbers. Convinced of this old truism, that small presents preserve friendship, in exchange for the aid he asked from them, he sent them the impressions of the locks which he had taken for his own private use. Legagneur again had recourse to the mediation of Annette, who found the two friends at the Rue Deux-Ponts, on a wretched ground-floor, a place where they never met without taking great previous precaution. It was not their residence. Annette, whom I had desired to do all in her power to learn this, had the sense not to lose sight of them. She followed them for two days, under different disguises; and, on the third, informed me that they slept in the small Rue St. Jean, in a house with gardens behind. M. Henry, to whom I communicated this circumstance, arranged all the necessary measures which the nature of the place required; but his officers were not more courageous, nor more skillful, than those from whom Fossard had escaped. The two robbers saved themselves by the garden, and it was not till some time afterward that they were apprehended in the Rue St. Hyacinthe St. Michel.

Legagneur having been in his turn conducted to the Conciergerie, was replaced in my room by the son of a vintner at Versailles, named Robin, who, united with the thieves of the capital, told me, in our conversations, their arrangements, as well concerning all that had been done, as of their present state and intended plans. He it was who pointed out to me the prisoner Mardargent as a fugitive galley-slave, whilst he was only detained in custody as a deserter; for this latter crime he had been sentenced to twenty-four years' labor at the galleys: he had passed some time in the Bagne; and by the help of my notes and recollections, we were soon excellent

friends: he fancied (and he was not mistaken) that I should be delighted to meet again my old companions in misfortune: he pointed out several amongst the prisoners, and I was fortunate enough to send back to the galleys a considerable number of those individuals whom justice, for want of the necessary proofs for their conviction, might have let loose upon society.

Never had any period been marked with more important discoveries than that which ushered in my debut in the service of the police; although scarcely enrolled in this administration, I had already done much for the safety of the capital, and even for the whole of France. Were I to relate half my successes in my new department, my reader's patience would be exhausted.

IX

As the secret agent of government, I had duties marked out, and the kind and respectable M. Henry took upon himself to instruct me in their fulfillment; for in his hands were entrusted nearly the entire safety of the capital: to prevent crimes, discover malefactors, and to give them up to justice, were the principal functions confided to me. By thieves M. Henry was styled the Evil Spirit; and well did he merit the surname, for with him, cunning and suavity of manners were so conjoined as seldom to fail in their purpose. Among the coadjutors of M. Henry, was M. Bertaux, a cross-examiner of great merit. The proofs of his talent may be found in the archives of the court. Next to him, I have great pleasure in naming M. Parisot, governor of the prisons. In a word, M. Henry, Bertaux, and Parisot, formed a veritable triumvirate, which was incessantly conspiring against the perpetrators of all manner of crimes; to extirpate rogues from Paris, and to procure for the inhabitants of that immense city a perfect security.

So soon as I was installed in my new office of secret agent, I commenced my rounds, in order to take my measures well for setting effectually to work. These journeys, which occupied me nearly twenty days, furnished me with many useful and important observations, but as yet I was only preparing to act, and studying my ground.

One morning I was hastily summoned to attend the chief of the division. The matter in hand was to discover a man named Watrin, accused of having fabricated and put in circulation false money and bank notes. The inspectors of the police had already arrested Watrin, but, according to custom, had allowed him to escape. M. Henry gave me every direction which he deemed likely to assist me in the search after him; but unfortunately he had only gleaned a few simple particulars of his usual habits and customary haunts; every place he was known to frequent was freely pointed out to me; but it was not very likely he would be found in those resorts which prudence would call upon him carefully to avoid; there remained therefore only a chance of reaching him by some bypath. When I learned that he had left his effects in a furnished house, where he once lodged, on the boulevard of Mont Parnasse, I took it for granted that, sooner or later, he would go there in search of his property; or at least that he would send some person to fetch it from thence; consequently, I directed all my vigilance to this spot; and after having reconnoitered the house, I lay in ambush in its vicinity night and day, in order to keep a watchful eye upon all comers and goers. This went on for nearly a week, when, weary of not observing anything, I determined upon engaging the master of the house in my interest, and to hire an apartment of him, where I accordingly established myself with Annette, certain that my presence could give rise to no suspicion. I had occupied this post for about fifteen days, when one evening, at eleven o'clock, I was informed that Watrin had just come, accompanied by another person. Owing to a slight indisposition, I had retired to bed earlier than usual; however, at this news I rose hastily, and descended the staircase by four stairs at a time; but whatever diligence I might use, I was only just in time to catch Watrin's companion; him I had no right to detain, but I made myself sure that I might, by intimidation obtain farther particulars from him. I therefore seized him, threatened him, and soon drew from him a confession, that he was a shoemaker, and that Watrin lived with him, No. 4, Rue des Mauvais Garçons. This was all I wanted to know: I had only had time to slip an old great coat over my shirt, and without stopping to put

on more garments, I hurried on to the place thus pointed out to me. I reached the house at the very instant that some person was quitting it: persuaded that it was Watrin, I attempted to seize him; he escaped from me, and I darted after him up a staircase; but at the moment of grasping him, a violent blow which struck my chest, drove me down twenty stairs. I sprang forward again, and that so quickly, that to escape from my pursuit he was compelled to return into the house through a sash window. I then knocked loudly at the door, summoning him to open it without delay. This he refused to do. I then desired Annette (who had followed me) to go in search of the guard, and whilst she was preparing to obey me, I counterfeited the noise of a man descending the stairs. Watrin, deceived by this feint, was anxious to satisfy himself whether I had actually gone, and softly put his head out of window to observe if all was safe. This was exactly what I wanted. I made a vigorous dart forward, and seized him by the hair of his head: he grasped me in the same manner, and a desperate struggle took place; jammed against the partition wall which separated us, he opposed me with a determined resistance. Nevertheless, I felt that he was growing weaker; I collected all my strength for a last effort; I strained every nerve, and drew him nearly out of the window through which we were struggling: one more trial and the victory was mine; but in the earnestness of my grasp we both rolled on the passage floor, on to which I had pulled him: to rise, snatch from his hands the shoemaker's cutting-knife with which he had armed himself, to bind him, and lead him out of the house, was the work of an instant. Accompanied only by Annette, I conducted him to the prefecture, where I received the congratulations first of M. Henry, and afterward those of the prefect of police, who bestowed on me a pecuniary recompense. Watrin was a man of unusual address; he followed a coarse clumsy business, and yet he had given himself up to making counterfeit money, which required extreme delicacy of hand. Condemned to death, he obtained a reprieve the very hour that was destined for his execution; the scaffold was prepared, he was taken down from it, and the lovers of such scenes experienced a disappointment. All Paris remembers it. A report was in circulation that he

was about to make some very important discoveries; but as he had nothing to reveal, a few days afterward he underwent his sentence.

Watrin was my first capture, and an important one too; this successful beginning awoke the jealousy of the peace-officers, as well as those under my orders; all were exasperated against me, but in vain; they could not forgive me for being more successful than themselves. The superiors, on the contrary, were highly pleased with my conduct; and I redoubled my zeal to render myself still more worthy their confidence.

[Here follow a series of separate narratives of the similar tricks and captures by which Vidocq became celebrated as a detective.]

THE END

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